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The  
Broken  
Lance

Herbert Quick

FILE

THE WILLIAM ARMFIELD HOLT \*

AND ETHEL RHODES HOLT FUND



The Hols on February 22, 1903 \*

\* The first marriage in Memorial Church

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# BROKEN LANCE

By

HERBERT QUINN

Author of

"The Broken Lance"

and "The Broken Lance"

With an Introduction by

HERBERT QUINN

Published by

THE BROKEN LANCE COMPANY

NEW YORK



# THE BROKEN LANCE

*By*  
**HERBERT QUICK**

**Author of**  
**Aladdin & Co.**  
**Double Trouble, etc.**

**With Illustrations by**  
**C. D. WILLIAMS**

**INDIANAPOLIS**  
**THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY**  
**PUBLISHERS**

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**OCTOBER**

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**BRAUNWORTH & CO.,**  
**BOOKBINDERS AND PRINTERS**  
**BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

Suddenly a great star, like a sun, appeared high in the air over the temple . . . ; and a great song arose from the men in white. . . . At the farther end, a throne stood upon a platform. . . . On the throne sat a majestic-looking figure, whose posture seemed to indicate a mixture of pride and benignity as he looked down on the multitude below. . . . I made my way through the crowd to the front, while the singing yet continued, desirous of reaching the platform while it was unoccupied by any of the priests. . . . When I arrived on the platform the song had just ceased, and I felt as if all were looking toward me. But, instead of kneeling at its foot, I walked right up the stairs to the throne, laid hold of a great wooden image that seemed to sit upon it, and tried to hurl it from its seat. In this I failed at first, for I found it firmly fixed. But in dread lest, the first shock of amazement passing away, the guards would rush upon me before I had effected my purpose, I strained with all my might; and, with a noise as of the cracking, and breaking, and tearing of rotten wood, something gave way, and I hurled the image down the steps. Its displacement revealed a great hole in the throne, like the hollow of a decayed tree, going down apparently a great way. But I had no time to examine it, for, as I looked into it, up out of it rushed a great brute, like a wolf, but twice the size, and tumbled me headlong with itself down the steps of the throne.

GEORGE MACDONALD, *Phantastes*.





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# THE BROKEN LANCE



# THE BROKEN LANCE

## CHAPTER I

### THROWN TOGETHER AS DICE

"Morgan Yeager, stand up!"

It was one boy of one-and-twenty commanding another only a little younger; but Emerson Courtright had back of his command all the mightinesses which make up authority—and Morgan Yeager stood up. A thrill ran through the room. Would this favorite pupil be actually punished, or was it a disciplinary feint? A crisis in the little government was clearly recognized. The handsome young teacher's word was to be kept, now, or broken.

"One promise I made to the school-board when I was placed here," said Emerson. "Fighting—rowdiness—has been the bane of the school. I promised to stamp it out. After the rule is laid down, it makes no difference whether it is broken by an old offender or some other pupil. Is it true, Morgan, that you were fighting with one of the Collins boys on your way home from school last Friday?"

"Yes, sir," responded Morgan; "I was fighting with both of them."

"Did you not strike the first blow?"

"Yes, sir; I struck the first blow."



"Is it not true that you whipped James Collins severely, and—"

"I whipped them both," answered Morgan, "Jim and Ned; as severely as I could."

The young teacher, who had won medals for hammer-throwing and shot-putting, and who had at times that tingling of the blood, as we shall see, that leads to broken heads, was too youthful not to feel more sympathy than he ought with the admiration that rippled over the boys' faces as they gazed at Morgan, and then at the vacant seats of the "fighting Collinses." But he crushed the sympathy for the sake of discipline. Consistency is most precious to the young.

"You may come forward!" said Emerson.

It was no feint, then! Morgan walked calmly up to the rostrum. The pupils exchanged glances, some smiling the mirthless smile that goes with pale cheeks and trembling fingers. The tension of mind was such as rarely comes to any gathering of adults; for well they knew that, under the rule laid down, and according to school usages, Morgan Yeager must be whipped—and the punishment of one human being by another is always, to the uncorrupted mind, a thing of horror.

Emerson lifted the lid of his desk, and saw his yellow-backed copy of Herbert Spencer's *Education*, from which he had imbibed the notion that rough, rude punishments may not be dispensed with in dealing with youth of rough, rude parentage. This bound boy from a New York foundlings' home had never had the "race-development" entitling him to immunity from the rod. Wishing fervently that he might have been spared this application of his conception of syn-

thetic philosophy, Emerson drew from the inside of the desk a riding-whip. Morgan's jaw muscles swelled as his teeth clenched.

"If you have any excuse to offer," said the teacher, who had learned from Bain's *Mistakes in Teaching* that it is error to neglect appeals to the pupils' sense of justice, "I will hear it."

"I had excuse enough for me," said Morgan, "but it wouldn't do any good under the rules."

"You admit that you deserve punishment, then?"

"I admit," said Morgan, drawing a distinction going deep into penology, "that I've got it coming."

The girls hid their faces on their desks, and some sobbed convulsively. One of them, a dark little creature with great black eyes—wells of questioning terror—sat with her fingers twisted together and gazed fixedly at Emerson, wincing distressfully as Morgan turned his back to receive the stroke.

He was a short, strong boy of some sixteen years or so, but with an older look, attributable, perhaps, to a sort of weather-beaten color in both skin and raiment. His face was bronzed, with red veinlets on the cheeks, his hands were chapped and some of his fingers were wrapped in tarred rags. He had on brown denim trousers, and his legs showed lines betraying hard muscles with little clothing over them. He wore a cheap coat of cotton diagonal much frayed at the wrists, which were innocent of cuff or other linen. His coat was buttoned tightly, and, oddly enough, its collar was turned up and the lapels pinned closely together.

"Sheepskin under his coat!" whispered one boy to another.

Perhaps the queerly buttoned-up coat suggested something of the sort to Emerson; for he paused, drawing the whip through his hand.

"Remove your coat," said he.

The boy started, for the first time moved from his Spartan calm. His hands went hesitantly to the pin, and dropped to his side again. A red flush deepened the tint of the weathered young face, and a dangerous gleam came into the brown eyes. Every child in the room knew that, for some reason, here his obedience ended.

"Will you remove that coat?" demanded Courtright commandingly. He saw the boy's shoulders resolutely square themselves; but for all that, he expected Morgan to yield. Instead, he turned like a prize-fighter taking position in the ring; his eyes looked straight into those of his opponent, and his voice was firm as he gave the unexpected reply:

"No, I won't!"

Emerson's color heightened in its turn, as the passion, which speeds most punishment, rose at this challenge.

"I shall give you two minutes in which to take it off," said he, laying his watch on the desk. "It will be better for you to do it. At the end of two minutes, if you have not taken it off, I shall do it. You have already added to your punishment; I advise you not to make it worse for yourself."

The boys knew well that the young college man was far superior to his pupil in both strength and skill, as well as in age and size. But they knew, too, the disadvantage under which he would labor in an endeavor forcibly to remove the coat of the boy who

had been able to beat the "fighting Collinses," especially when his back was so desperately against the wall. There was intensified stress, therefore, when Emerson spoke again.

"One half-minute gone," said he gravely.

The ticking of the heat in the stove-pipe, like that of a dozen watches, could be distinctly heard in the pause that ensued. It intruded on Emerson's magisterial calm with the irrelevant suggestion that it was Morgan who built the fire for him that morning.

"One minute gone," said Emerson. "I advise you to obey!"

"Only half a minute more," he said, as the boy still stood mute. "I advise you to obey, sir!"

"I never will!" replied Morgan, now with a wail of protest in his voice. "You may kill me first!"

"Only a quarter of a minute more!" said Mr. Courtright after a pause. And then, as the watch told off the last of the fifteen seconds: "For the last time, will you take off that coat?"

The stocky, ill-clad figure was firm, now, and there was no protest, but only defiance, as he faced his dearest friend, now become his foe.

"I'll see you in hell first!" he snarled. "Come and take it off, if yeh think yeh can!"

Courtright, with that resentment men feel when some supposedly helpless creature girds itself up for resistance, stepped forward like a wrestler manœuvring for a hold, when, to his astonishment, a little figure in brown sprang before him, and a pair of great, wide, black eyes gleamed widely into his. Two slender, girlish hands pressed against his breast, holding him back.

"Stop, teacher, stop!" she cried. "Oh, you *must* stop! Don't you *see*—he'd do anything you told him, if he could! He can't take it off! Oh, you've never been poor, as we are out here, and you don't know how he may be dressed: but you ought to know that Morgan'd do anything you told him to, if he could! You ought to know that—you ought to understand!"

The sternness and the combativeness went out of the young man's face, and the little girl saw gentleness and pity and deep remorse supplant them, as he felt how dastardly a thing he had done, and how pathetic was the poor boy's battle for the sacred right to conceal his poverty. The girl went sobbing to her seat, when he gravely told her to go, her force all spent, soul and body convulsed and torn by the great impulse which had caused her to do this awful thing.

"Morgan," said Emerson gently, "is this the reason you can't remove your coat?"

The boy passionately tore open the lapels, and showed his bare breast through great gaps in one tattered shirt.

"There!" he cried. "Now, are yeh satisfied? Do you want me to take it off so everybody may see the shape I'm in, and talk it over afterward? You think, because you have all you want to wear, that everybody can if they amount to anything! What do you know about it? What do you know! You try livin' in a sod shanty, with no woman, and Jim Mather for boss, and no money, and see! I've got no socks on my feet. I made my own mittens out of grain sacks—the drought and hot winds fixed it so we didn't need the sacks! I can't mend, because there ain't anything to mend or mend with. And when I

get home, it's dark, and I leave before light—" The boy momentarily checked himself, feeling that he might be taking an unknightly advantage in claiming credit for a favor to the teacher in coming early to attend to the school-house fire. Then he dashed again into what he deemed the heart of his defense—his poverty. "I tell you, the railroads and hot winds and mortgage sharks have took everything the hail left," he cried. "All we're doing is to pray for spring and grass enough so we can pull out for some country that ain't cursed. I've looked worse than a tramp all winter; and I've shook with the cold till I'm half sick with it; but I've tried to keep some—some things covered, till now, you shame me, you shame me! Whip me as I stand: it'll cut through all right: I've got on less than you'd have with your coat off! Oh! Mr. Courtright, Mr. Courtright! You've been mighty good to me—better'n anybody ever was; and I never expected to break any of your rules; but when that Collins crowd said what they did about—about the way I was—brought out here, and my—my mother—I had to—I had to! Send the scholars away, Mr. Courtright, and if you want me to, I'll take it off!"

No orator ever made a more effective plea than this of the shabby country boy, pleading for self-respect. The abandonment of passion with which he threw aside the reserve which only a moment before he had guarded so fiercely, the histrionic effectiveness of gesture and intonation—Emerson Courtright said to himself, as he had said before under less extraordinary circumstances, that the boy was a born debater.

Sensitive to apprehend and quick to utilize any



her school-fellows; but a stranger would have been interested in it. On the edge of her desk she had pasted white and black slips of paper representing the keys of a piano or organ, and as she ran her hands over these with the rapt expression of a virtuoso borne away by his own magic, a musician would have noted that her fingers struck accurately the dumb keys as called for by the music before her (a worn book of school songs), and that, to all appearances, the strange child heard the harmonies a real instrument would have given forth. With her lips a little parted and her eyes lifted to the dingy ceiling, she looked a Saint Cecilia in a separate world filled with melody heard by no ears but hers and far from the clamor about her. Emerson alone looked curiously at her as he rapped on his desk for order.

The pupils slouched to their seats. A few verses from the Scriptures were read, and Olive Dearwester was called upon to start the tune of *The Star-spangled Banner*. In the song were the dissonances and harshness usually found in school singing; but here, again, a stranger and a musician would have been astounded at the performance of the poorly clad little girl in the brown dress. Beginning in a soft, clear treble, apparently repressed so as not to drown the other voices, the child sang on, stronger and stronger, fuller and fuller, as the poetry and swing of the rhythm took possession of her, in seeming forgetfulness of time and place. The images of the rockets' glare, the bombs' explosions, and the fitfully blown banner still faintly discerned after the long night of watching, seemed to fill the little soul with an epic thrill. In the lower register, the voice was strangely somber

and pathetic; and it soared to the high tones with a dramatic brilliancy. The other voices died to a humming accompaniment, as the children suppressed them so as to hear Olive; and her unconscious solo filled the little school-room with music which seemed to some almost divine. The last phrase died on her lips, and she started and blushed to note how she had been carried away from her first repression.

In a few words Emerson announced that, owing to the increasing storm, school would be dismissed, so that all might safely reach home before it grew worse.

"Help me fix things for morning," said Emerson to Morgan, "and then go along with Olive and me."

The two boys went to the lobby, Emerson for his wraps, Morgan for his cap.

"You don't hold any hardness against me," said Emerson, "for what happened this morning?"

"No, no!" answered Morgan quickly. "How could I? You were right; anyway—why, you've taught me algebra and philosophy after school, and you've let me have books, and all that. You've been all the brother I ever had. You're the one to feel hard, if any one; but I—I sort of went crazy."

"Then you'll obey me next time?"

"Yes."

"Whatever I tell you to do!"

"Yes."

"Then put on my overcoat and wear it for me. I'm dressed as warm as can be—too warm. And I've a better overcoat at Dearwesters': put it on!"

"But I'm used to this," protested Morgan; "and you'll freeze going home,"

coat for me until it wears out, or I claim it. I make you a present of my hand-bell, my ruler, and all my traps in the school-house, including Spencer's *Education*, Bain's *Mistakes in Teaching* (I've made most of them!), and my subscription to the *Educational Review*. The *Life of Garrison*, Wendell Phillips' *Writings and Addresses*, and Mill's *Logic* you may keep; for you make better use of them than I do. The volume of Lowell's *Poems* you may send to me when you have quite finished reading it, to Maizefield, Kansas, care of the Reverend Winthrop Courtright.

"I shouldn't whip any of the pupils, if I were you. There's almost always a way out of it, if you don't fix penalties beforehand, as I did.

"I wish I could see you before I go. I suppose you will be studying law—you are such a debater and interested in public questions. You will succeed if you leave the girls alone until you are thirty or thirty-five. I don't know what I shall do. Father thinks I'm a born preacher, but, except for the speaking, I don't feel drawn that way much. I'm not as far above the common herd as a minister should be—not at all, in fact, as you very well know. Father thinks that since slavery was abolished and the friends of freedom put in charge of the government—he was a border-warfare, John Brown partizan, you know—that the church becomes the only great field for doing good, and that our laws and institutions are all right. He agrees in this with Lowell, Hay, Whittier, and the Concord group generally, and disagrees with such men as Whitman and Phillips. I guess he's right, as he generally is: I never could see much in Whitman. I should like to be in a

fight like the slavery agitation, but such days are over, since all men are free.

"I believe Thelka Thorson ought to go into the *Second Reader* pretty soon. You'll find outlines for the grammar class for a week ahead in the register. I'd follow the diagramming system pretty closely—it's easier for the class. If the higher arithmetic class gets stalled in that mess of promiscuous problems beginning on page 231, I'd put them back for a review of fractions and precentage, and then jump to the problems again. I would keep up the drill on diacritical markings and the use of the dictionary.

"I must close. Mrs. Dearwester is calling me to breakfast, and the horses are harnessed to pull out at daylight, the roads are drifted so. Don't forget me, Morgan. I made a mistake yesterday; but I know it's all right with you, if not with myself. You're going to be a prominent man, and sometime we'll meet. If I've done you any good, it's been by showing you what you've got in you.

"Good-by!"

Emerson sealed the letter, gave it to Olive to deliver to Morgan at the school-house, and joined the family at their breakfast, before the dawn.

"And now, my little prima donna," said he, as he waited for the wagon, "when you become a great singer, you'll be forgetting me, I suppose?"

Olive sat calm as a statue, except that occasionally a big slow tear rolled down into her lap.

"And then, when everybody is in love with you," he went on, "I'll come around and remind you that I've waited for you as I promised, and you'll—"

"Now, stop!" she cried in great apparent distress. "You think I'm a baby! But I'm not! And I won't be talked baby-talk to! I wish I was dead—I do, I do!"

"Now, Ollie, Ollie!" said Emerson soothingly. "You know I didn't mean any harm. Come and sit on my knee, and—"

"Leave me alone!" she cried between her convulsive sobs; but when he had, with gentle violence, taken her upon his lap, she sat there, crying upon his shoulder.

"I meant what I said, Ollie," he persisted, "about the singing. Sometime, if you take advantage of every hint that comes to you, and study hard, and practise constantly, you'll be a fine soprano, in some great city church, with a big salary and dozens of rich pupils."

"I'll never learn a thing after you're gone—never a thing!" she cried. "It will be the same as it was before you came."

"Nonsense!" he answered. "I don't know any music, except a little some good teachers taught me in such a way that I couldn't forget it, and I've told you all that already. You mustn't use your throat muscles, remember; and you must practise every day before a mirror, so as to have a pleasant expression instead of that colicky look some singers have—"

Olive laughed hysterically at this joke; and narrowly escaped passing over into weeping again. Emerson went on:

"Breathe from the diaphragm, as I've shown you, and keep looking at the back of your mouth in the glass to see that you carry your 'da, me, ni, po, tu, la,

be, da' clear from your lowest tone to high C without moving the soft palate a bit."

"I can do that now," said she, "and above high C."

"Well, that's high enough," he continued, glad of his success in quieting her. "Don't push it too high. Always open your throat as if you were yawning, and then leave it quite at rest. Why, I almost learned to sing once, by these rules. And sometime some one will come along and teach you style—something I know nothing about—and then you'll be a singer!"

"I could learn with you," she protested, "anything, whether—"

"Whether I knew anything about it or not?" laughed Emerson. "That takes a mighty smart pupil, Olive!"

"I never knew anybody that knew anything," wailed Olive, "till you came."

"That's a pretty hard slam on the rest of the family!" observed her mother.

"You know what I mean, ma," she cried, exasperated again. "I won't go to school to these common teachers like Emma Schaefer and Mary McLaughlin. I'll stay at home and read the books you've given me, and do the things you say; and that's everything I'll do, if they whip me, even—so there!"

"Your pa and I will see about that," replied Mrs. Dearwester, putting a nail in the damaged disciplinary fences of the family. "We'll see about it for a while anyway. Here's the wagon. Take this old shawl, Emerson, to wrap around your head. And won't you write to let us know how you get through? We'll be pretty—pretty lonesome, all of us, when you're gone—out here forty miles from nowhere. You've been—a good deal of company for us!"

Emerson kissed her filially and Olive fraternally, and went away, thinking how abundantly good people are, after all, if you only get close to them.

Emerson Courtright, with his intensity of feeling, the basic reference of all things—even those, as to which he erred—to his conscience, left behind him a germinant tendency to spiritual change. The fact is that no one in the Dearwester school was ever quite the same after he went away. He was of the sort that stimulate and fructify the minds of others. He left the little country girl weeping on her pillow at the departure of the Hero, according to all the ancient canons of femininity, but reading and thinking and doing things of which she might never have heard, had he not come. He left the country boy reading Phillips and Garrison and Spencer and John Stuart Mill, who last year was mightily pleased with himself as he spouted the turgid contents of the yellow-backed *Complete Speaker*. These two, at least, were nevermore content with life in the somewhat arid sphere to which Providence had called them. If such things be ever good, whether they were so in these cases, must abide some distant issues.

Everybody said it was a good thing for Morgan Yeager, because it gave him standing—and thirty dollars a month. He was now of the humblest level in a profession the peaks of which were lost in the empyrean of colleges, universities, and city superintendencies. Jim Mather trekked toward the rain-belt when the wild geese came harrowing the blue and honking replies to the cries of the cranes slow-circling far above them, when the mallards quacked in the reeds, and the first slough-grass shot up through the

water of the ponds; but Morgan stayed by his teaching—an emancipated foundling.

Eventful years followed in the short-grass country. The hopeful settlers of yesterday lost hope, and their American good-nature turned bitter. The droughts and hot winds and hail and dearth must be taken as they came; but why, they said, should be piled, on the burden of these unavoidable woes, the needless fardels of a money crisis? Every meeting-place in this country where Morgan Yeager was stepping into manhood, became the scene of debates in which the money power and the monopolies were examined with more or less insight by gatherings of earnest, full-bearded men and worn women, who spoke of the railroads and mortgage sharks as glibly as did Morgan Yeager when he accused them as accessory to his crime of not removing his coat to be whipped.

The atmosphere was vocal with an all-pervading Why. Why, in a free country, had social forces hunted out and driven them to this parched and wind-swept steppe? Why, if free at all, were they not free to live where they could produce? Why were they thus held helpless and crushed as in an economic vise? Why were they obliged to pay so much for freights when they had so little wherewithal to pay? What was the trouble?

Some said it was our land system, some the railways; but most asserted it to be a vague monster which they visualized under the name of the Money Power. They read paper-covered books of which the professors of economics were ignorant; and they began challenging the institutions which had produced or permitted them to see these distresses. Far-sighted



men, East and West, saw in this turmoil and questioning a portent of evil times for those who love quiet, should the ferment of inquiry and impious discontent once get its yeast into the great sodden lump of the unprivileged and poor, who had no drought on which their answerers might lay the blame for their condition. So they began setting in operation the means their power gave them for checking the movement or turning it. For, be it remembered, though the Hindu lives patiently all his race-life without a full meal, and lets the starvation of generations reduce vitality until middle age comes for him in the years when his western brother is in school, while his oppressors riot in luxury, put the price of a province in one jewel, their elephants "mad with pride" crushing the dying populace under their feet; though the Mongolian, crowded off the earth by land monopoly, unprotestingly takes up his abode upon the water, or plants rice, stalk by stalk, as we plant violets, and descends to a verminous regimen of rats and mice, while his privileged classes at the same time send over the earth for edible birds'-nests and Lucullan cates, growing obese upon unearned profusion: the Anglo-Saxon endures the absence of roast beef, grumbling, for a while, in East End processions, Coxey armies, and the like—until at last come marching Jack Straw and John Ball, the Chartists, or the "muck-rakers." Whereupon the privileged classes yield something, and a new adjustment is tried. Hence the uneasiness at the Populist uprising in the arid regions, on the part of the far-sighted Anglo-Saxons who possessed privileges and therefore loved quiet, and wanted no new adjustment.

In such a movement, the young teacher who studied Wendell Phillips and loved debate could not fail to be called upon to take some part. He had what seemed, to his enthusiastic fellows, a coldness of intellect which deprived him of a share in the confidence they felt in the curative value of currency reform, as set forth in *Ten Men of Money Island* and other tracts. He kept talking to them of "freeing the land," and of their failure to see what he called the "bottom evil." But they admitted that he was on fire with the passion of persuasion—especially in the great mass convention at the county-seat, which the railways and banks and their followers thought they had packed so as to beat "the Pops," and where his fire burned up all opposition.

It was this Populist orator, and, at last, this Populist legislator, into which the times and Emerson's books transformed young Morgan Yeager. And when the farmers and country lawyers of his party met in control of the State, Morgan found them, as he thought, but weak imitations of reformers and tentative palterers with reform. He was for "basic changes." They wanted only better prices for wheat and land. He suspected them of being under corporation influences. They looked upon him as a hopeless irreconcilable. The common ground of agreement grew smaller and smaller.

The upshot of it all was that he went back to his old neighborhood convinced that the fight was lost and wondering what new opening might present itself to a young man who confessed himself a confirmed agitator. It was then that he called, after a long, long absence, at the Dearwester farm "to see the

folks"—meaning Olive. A pale-eyed Swede opened the door.

"Hay bane gone," said the Swede. "Ol' man Dare-veste hay die, an' ol' voomans take young voomans away. Shay bane dam purty girl an' crazy over de moosic. Shay bane gosh dang purty singer."

It was night. When Morgan came down the road to the school-house, instead of going to some place of entertainment, he sat down on a great boulder in the old playground, and thought. Once he struck a match to see if the grooves, which Emerson had explained to them as the scores of glacial action, were there as in old school-days. Emerson was gone from his life for ever: that seemed quite clear. But Olive, his defender—he had imagined meeting her again in her expanding womanhood, and now knew that the wish to see her was the one thing which had brought him back. The dawn was breaking in the east when he rose from the stone from which, like a derelict floated from its grounding, he drifted away into an uncharted sea.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TAKING OF A CITY

When a certain young Mr. Courtright came to the pastorate of the great First Church of the city of Lattimore, there was much the same shock of stimulus and vivification in the community as that which Courtright, the young teacher, had brought to his frontier school.

He came to minister to the merely spiritual needs of the congregation while a permanent successor to Doctor Fulton could be sought. But he soon became an institution, like the Cornish Opera House, the packing-houses, the Public Library, and Schlessinger's Brewery, with a recognized influence in making up the sum total of that locally overwhelming thing, the Prosperity of Lattimore. People, who never saw the inside of a church from the period of their arrival in town to that time when the old wooden sanctuary of the First Church with its front torn out was moved down Main Street on rollers, were much interested in keeping in town a man whose attractive ministry could be shown to have been the cause of several families coming to the city, and, as Mr. Elkins, the chief boomer, said, did as much to swell population as the Halliday round-houses.

"It's a fine thing," answered Captain Marion Tolliver, who was too good a Southerner to see or admit the playfulness of Mr. Elkins in dealing with such a

subject, "a fine thing foh us all. Such means of grace ah priceless privileges, ah of priceless value, and as you say, have theiah influence on population and real-estate quotations. Aftah listenin' to him Ah feel as if Ah'd been wafted ovah the universe, an' seen all points of interest in fohty minutes. Ripplin' streams, bubblin' brooks, go'geous mo'nin's and evenin's, snow-clad mountains, green meadows spahklin' with dew; and down undah it all, the eahthquake of judgment and the thundah of Sinai. It's Miltonic; it's Shakespearean; and sometimes it's Dantean. No wondah the town's crazy ovah him."

"And to think," answered Mr. Elkins, "that such an improvement must be confessed to have been rail-roaded into the city by the Halliday System, and not the L. and G. W.! The Reverend Emerson Court-right broke in with a Johnny and not with a jimmy."

Being a self-made man, Mr. Elkins, president of the L. and G. W. Railway may, perhaps, be excused for punning upon his own name and that of his rival in business, Superintendent John Bloodgood, of the Lattimore Division of the Halliday System—who was not really that loathsome thing slangily known as a "Johnny"; but, being a product of the schools and, it was whispered, somewhat indebted to his social graces for his advancement in the railway world, was, of course, misjudged by the potent but punning and uncultured Elkins. He was the son of Judge Bloodgood, of the United States Circuit and District Courts, one of those jurists, now constituting so large a proportion of our Federal judiciary, who have been given to the bench by the patriotism of the great corporations. Judge Bloodgood, during many years of suc-

cessful and honorable practice as the leader of the Lattimore bar, had served the Halliday System well. It must have been felt as a loss to the company when, through the vast political influence of its fourth vice-president and general solicitor, "General" Hess, of Chicago, an old classmate of his, he was elevated to the bench, where, of course, he could serve the corporation no longer.

It was John Bloodgood—or was it Amy?—who brought Emerson to Lattimore; and this was the way of it. The young men had been, at the State University, if not exactly chums, at least good friends: so much so that Emerson had made vacation visits to the Bloodgood mansion; and there had been a promising love affair with Jack's young sister Amy. This romance was interrupted by the fair Amy's being sent, in the ordinary course of her breeding, to some vastly exclusive and aristocratic school, and to Europe; and by an estrangement between him and her brother. It was foot-ball that brought them together and foot-ball that separated them. Emerson, being a sort of human steam-engine, was touted as an All-America tackle by the wise ones about the training-table. One day he put out of the game a member of the second team, and it was subsequently found that the boy was badly hurt. It was one of those affairs that are whispered about. Emerson nursed him for weeks, and refused to play again. Jack, being manager of the team, was not to be placated by Emerson's field-meet laurels. Jack's position was this: civilization is organized line-bucking, life a scrimmage, and when ribs splinter and brains concuss, the fault is in the ribs and brains; Emerson

was a softy, and he shouldn't go back on the team, anyhow. Amy defended him: but absence, unless taken in moderation, distinctly does not make the heart grow fonder: so when school-days were well over, it was a case of forgiving with Jack and forgetting with Amy.

It will be remembered that, long ago, out on the Dearwester farm, in the letter which Emerson wrote to Morgan Yeager, he kept saying "father says" this, and "father says" that. The old Abolitionist, idealist and partizan-evangelist gave out his opinions to Emerson as he set before him his meals. So Emerson went to the schools of theology and philosophy and philology, thus separating from Jack by the gulf between them and the School of Technology which made the latter a civil engineer.

Naturally, being a son of Judge Bloodgood, of the United States courts, Jack was employed by the Halliday System, where his progress was rather slow until his claims to promotion were presented to "General" Hess (now become second vice-president, and very strong in Halliday councils) by his daughter and only child, Mrs. Alleyne, whose unhappy marriage with Captain Alleyne, of the British army, is a story by itself, and one which can not fairly be told until the conflicting statements of the Chicago and London versions of it can be reconciled. Perhaps I ought not to have mentioned it at all. But it was while she was a member of what is vulgarly known as the Sioux Falls divorce colony, that Jack, being on duty near, paid his respects to her, and was surprised to find that she did not seem to be as much his superior in age as the facts would, at first blush, indicate.

Mildred Hess-Alleyne was touched by his thoughtfulness and sympathy for a misunderstood girl, and assumed the rôle of the daughter of Herodias to such effect that the head of Jack's predecessor, on a charger, was the *pièce de résistance* on the table at the next session of the body having control over the matter; and Jack was provided with a superintendency much earlier than mere merit would have brought him to it—a place filled by him with an ability worthy of the Bloodgoods. He was looked upon as a "comer." His intimacy with the Hess family was in itself a sufficient warrant for this, and gave rise to a succession of those rumors which are usually ripples from the prow of an incoming nuptial barge.

The Bloodgoods were strong in the First Church. On both sides the family record contained the names of many divines eminent in the denomination. While John was not what would be called a pious man, being more devoted to clubs, golf, aquatic sports, horses, and the militia than to the more orthodox means of grace, his name was on the church rolls, and when Doctor Fulton collapsed in the pulpit one day, John felt an interest in the filling of the place.

"Wasn't your friend, Mr. Courtright, a fine speaker, Jack?" asked Amy.

"Corking," answered Jack. "Why?"

"Oh, nothing," replied Amy. "Only we got the announcement of his ordination a few days ago, and he might do as a supply, you know."

"Good thought!" replied Jack. "It'll square my roasting him for flunking on foot-ball. As a prospective parson, I don't blame him any more. I'll see the committee to-night."



On arriving, Mr. Courtright was taken into the possession of the Bloodgoods. It would have been the same with any one else, as of Bloodgood right, but Emerson took it as an evidence of the persistence of the old friendship, and greeted his friend with a "Hello, Jack!" as hearty as it was unclerical—which evoked an equally informal "Hello, Em, old man!" and the information that his dunnage was to go up to the house.

Two people who have been once even grazed by the arrow of love, never meet for the first time after a long separation, with pulses quite undisturbed. Yet Amy met Emerson with her most aloof cordiality.

"Oh, Mr. Courtright," she cried, "how good of you to come! I suppose you remember me? I'm Miss Bloodgood, who was a little girl when you visited Jack, so long ago."

"Surely," said he. "I should have known you anywhere, Miss Bloodgood."

It was rather tactful of him, she thought, to catch at the first cast the rather inartistically obvious clue she threw him in the "Miss Bloodgood." No boy-and-girl philandering—fit for Strephon and Chloe, absurd for a poor young clergyman and the daughter of a hundred Bloodgoods with the great matrimonial sea about her swarming with the progeny of the captains of industry. A very discreet young man.

And yet, when music (she sang in the choir, also of right), and the chat between the trying of anthems and the singing of duets, brought them nearer to the old times, she forgot the aloofness of her cordiality. He was as companionable as ever, and sang her favorite songs passably well.

At church, he had not been speaking five minutes before the last of those lost souls who were disposed to be against him through jealousy of Bloodgood ascendancy were won over.

*"There came unto him a woman," ran his text, "having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat."*

With a few fine, bold strokes, he drew a picture of the fast-closing ministry of Jesus; the multitude which followed Him; the straits to which the wandering host was often put for food and drink; the unselfishness with which His followers met every crisis by selling all they had and giving to the poor. And the hearts of the congregation glowed with warmth at the thought of such fine altruism—in that good old time, so far from the present, and, be it remembered, in Judea, not America.

Then Emerson drew another picture—a beautiful canvas, showing the great Evangel sitting at meat, under the shadow of advancing doom. It was already clear to His disciples that He was not to establish a kingdom at Jerusalem—He had said so. He had talked of dying. They tried to be cheerful over their frugal meal of dates or figs or bread and fish; but in the heart of every man were the grisly specters of doubt and fear; the timid were falling off, and, among the twelve, one was thinking of the silver for betraying Him. The sensitive soul of Jesus shrank from contact with this atmosphere, like a wounded member from an ungentle touch.

Then came, who? The woman with the alabaster cruse. Of all that company, hers was the heart most filled with love. She must do something to cry her

faith to all the world, so extraordinary as to rebuke the gloom and doubt around Him. A woman! His audience tingled at the nervous fire of his limning of the many, many vessels of alabaster emptied by women on the heads of lost causes and failing heroes, of the women in Lattimore who were pouring out their precious treasures on husbands and brothers deserted by all the world besides.

Then he dried their tears with a humorous treatment of those who object to fine homes, pictures, beautiful churches, as the disciples objected to the pouring out of the ointment, because it might have been sold and given to the poor; and grew serious on the theme of the supreme preciousness of inspiration. Alluding to the presence of the poor among us always, as one of the mysteries which he passed by, as Jesus did, as a fact to be met and not a condition to be cured, Emerson closed in a beautiful period showing the wisdom of any outlay which brings the soul to higher levels.

"That which feeds the soul," was remembered to have been a part of this peroration, "is more than that which ministers to the body. Let us still rear our Parthenons, our Peter's domes, our Notre Dames; let us still give to those who weave the wondrous charm of music; let us render homage and sacrifice to those who body forth their dreams in speaking canvas or breathing marble; let us still empty our alabaster cruse upon the beloved head of any inspired soul who may say of us as Jesus did of this woman: 'She hath wrought a good work upon me.'"

Judge Bloodgood, tall, wrapped about, even at his home, with the judicial toga, as is fitting in the case

of one of those Sacred Ones raised up in a republic to a place from which they may nevermore be taken down, and therefore, as far as character is concerned, legally presumed to be infallible—Judge Bloodgood, crowned with white hair and bearing in his countenance the sign-manual of intellect, unbent that evening, and smiled benignantly upon his guest.

“Such sermons as that,” he said, “are in most grateful contrast to those of the sensational pulpits from which we hear harangues which tend to inflame the minds of the people. I congratulate you and thank you.”

Amy sat looking at him from her nook, with reviving interest. After all, he was a charming man, and pleasant to see, standing there flushed with pleasure at this grateful praise. He had grown heavier, since he left the Dearwester school; but he still had the figure and pose of the All-America tackle. The little golden mustache was gone now, but the loss only accentuated the pout of the full lips, which, with the old carmine on the cheeks, and the blue of the fine mild eyes, gave his face that thing so rare in men, color. The thick hair was still thrown up from the brow in the hyacinthine waves which conspired with the sensitive nostril, the aquiline nose and perfect profile to give to those who thronged his meetings the impression of some old masterpiece of art, or of the heads on ancient Roman coins, or of Greek statues. Some were reminded of Napoleon; others, of such heads as those of Shelley, or Byron, or the Chandos Shakespeare; all of which probably meant that he was a poet, rather than a man of affairs—and, in any case, a good-looking fellow with a great gift of

appeal. His voice had deepened and mellowed, and he had acquired the facial habit which comes of conscious use before public assemblages—some said he looked like an actor.

“Good night, Miss Bloodgood,” said he at parting.

She wished, almost, that he had said “Amy” as he once did. Then she blamed herself. For all that, there was a charm about him. The people of the church were infatuated after another Sunday; and Amy was conscious of an advance toward the old intimacy.

“Let the girls alone until you are thirty or thirty-five,” was Emerson’s advice to Morgan Yeager in that last letter. He had been, so far, quite consistent, in action, with this utterance. Amy was the first really attractive girl within whose radius of allure-ment he had come, and she appealed to him powerfully. Perhaps, at his age, and in his situation, it was largely a matter of propinquity: but there was something about her which fired his imagination, exciting it to enormous poetic activity, and that without reference to her virtues or defects. When he tried to reason upon her character, he got no further than an authoritative impression that, with such a glance to her eye, such a fetching cadence to her voice, such a mysteriously eloquent rustle to her dress, such a balmy odor to her hair, she was past reasoning upon. And his sermons were as fine and unstudied, as perfect in their power to thrill and sway, as the song of a bobolink in June—and by reason of the same immemorial frenzy.

The average attendance at all the services was doubled. At one week-night prayer-meeting his exhorta-

tions so wrought upon the people that there was a spontaneous demand for its continuance next evening, and, quite unintentionally, this one meeting grew to a series; and soon the city had one of those great revivals which sweep through a community like a consuming fire, and which overflowed from the churches into a greater auditorium. There, one Pentecostal night, a thousand people rose for prayers, after a sermon in which Courtright seemed possessed of some superhuman power of persuasion, when every pulsation of his throbbing brain ran through his auditors with an electric thrill. And all the time he was conscious that while the weapon may have been a straight shaft from the quiver of God, the impulse, which clothed with power the arm that drew the bow, was love of Amy. He felt a little conscience-stricken and disingenuous at this.

Howbeit, it was the church sensation of the hour, and Emerson was hailed as a new Moody or Drummond; and he was chosen to the regular pastorate of the First Church amid great and fervid rejoicings, half the church being his own new converts.

By this time, he knew enough of the House of Bloodgood to be able to understand that Amy might regard the position of a minister's wife as a descent in life, or, at least, a failure to rise to her opportunities. But he felt the uplift of genius, and he wanted her. He had a little land, down in Kansas, and the best of church positions outside the great cities. He was not in the habit of pleading in vain; yet it was with unwonted trepidation that he went to the Bloodgood mansion to ask for her promise.

## CHAPTER IV

### "THE FIRST FINE CARELESS RAPTURE"

Mr. Courtright's heart ought to be breaking, as he sits there in his study, surrounded by his books and pictures. That *Compendium of Theology* up there on the shelves proves that the people out on the street before the church, down in the stores, working in the packing-houses and mills, are, most of them, driving straight on to an eternity of some sort of dreadful woe. How he can be happy, believing this, is a mystery to all save those who know of the promise sought and won. The doors stand partly open, and through them he sees a vista of pews and columns splashed with stained light in gorgeous churchliness. Outside are William, the sexton, and William's wife, about their mysterious duties. People come and go on business with their pastor; and, between times, he alternately stands with his back to the grate fire, looking at his books, seeing no rebuke in the severe bindings of this *Compendium*, which he has vowed he believes, or sits reading a letter which he picks up from among the litter on the table.

The room is elegant, and the surroundings luxuriously grateful to the senses and sentiments of a man of culture and artistic instincts; but that ought to make no difference. Perhaps the letter throws light upon the matter of a world gone wrong, and, being written since the *Compendium*, repeals it.

It is from the celebrated Doctor Bovee, who could repeal the *Compendium* if any one could: but it merely informs Emerson that he is to be left in undisturbed possession of his conquered province at Lattimore.

Up to this time, Emerson had been rated in church circles with those who enter not in at the strait gate, but over the wall: and many old pastors, whose fingers had been softly pulling the wires of ecclesiastical politics for years, to the end that, when Doctor Fulton's ministry should terminate, they themselves might hear with surprised ears the mystic call to a larger usefulness in the vacant field, entertained thoughts they might not express, of people who go in through such by and forbidden paths. That the young preacher should come to Lattimore as a “supply,” was quite the proper thing; but for him so to delight and entrance the coldly critical and difficult congregation of the First Church, whose character was such that their wishes could not be ignored, as to bring about an insistent and unanimous demand for his retention, was really too much, and caused great vexation of spirit in ministerial circles for a hundred miles or so about. It was something portentous, that this young interloper should have the best church of his denomination in three States: why, he was not even known personally to Doctor Bovee, who was pope having jurisdiction over Lattimore.

Whether he was pope through church laws (in which case he would, of course, be called something else), or by virtue of one of those unofficial papacies which, even in the most congregationally organized churches, are almost as powerful, is immaterial. The



point is that, like all religious denominations, this one had its disbursers of patronage, its fountain-heads of ecclesiastical power, its ganglia of political influence, and that Doctor Bovee was the church boss of this part of the vineyard. And Doctor Bovee knew not Emerson Courtright.

Yet the good Doctor, and his cabinet of lesser lights scattered about the countryside, could find no fault with the young man. He was orthodox in his theology. He was entirely ignorant of economics and the social unrest, but strong on the literature of the early church. He preached, with that inconvenient eloquence of his, an individual salvation for every man, and through that the redemption of society, on which consummation he was modestly vague in his statements. He taught no disturbing doctrines. If he read a text about a camel and a needle's eye, he applied it to the rich of Palestine nineteen hundred years ago, where it was meant to apply, seeing clearly the difference between them and his own wealthy and substantial people. Above all, he was what the congregations are wont to call a "spiritual preacher"—that is, he regarded that exaltation of the inner consciousness which marks the intense manifestations of all religions—in Christian experience being called the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—as the supreme blessing; and he strove mightily to bring to all his people the psychic knowledge of the Spirit witnessing with their spirits that they were children of God. This was his appointed mission.

His successful revival and triumphant appointment had put firmer ground under his feet: and this letter from Doctor Bovee sealed his acceptance by the

church politic. He was walking over to have another look at it, when William came in.

"A young lady to see you, sir," said he.

"Miss Bloodgood, I suppose," said Emerson, "to consult about choir matters. Ask her—"

"No, sir," replied William, "it's a strange lady, to me. Here is her card."

"I declare!" exclaimed Mr. Courtright, looking at the card. "It reminds me of old times. 'Miss Dearwester, Instructor in Vocal Music and Piano; Oratorio and Concert Soprano.' I never heard the name anywhere else; but, of course, there are other Dearwesters. Ask her in, William."

Olive Dearwester came in. He knew her name, and yet doubted, as she dawned upon him in her entrance; she was ignorant of his, and still she knew him as soon as she stepped into the room. A few years, added to a girl's thirteen or fourteen, make all the difference imaginable: to a youth's one-and-twenty, they bring great changes, it is true; but what country maid ever forgot the hero of her third quinquennium; or failed to recognize the knight who had blown upon the slug-horn the blast which delivered her from the Dark Tower of an intellectual dungeon, and brought her to the greenery and song of another world; or was deceived by any disguise time might cast over the image which, from childhood, in her most secret visions, had floated with beckoning finger before her, its head crowned with the Shechinah of a canonization such as naught but girlhood can bestow, and that only in the delicious and illusive despair of a selfless and unpublishable adoration?

The eyes settled his doubts, and by them he knew.

her. She stood in astonishment, her hand upon her heart.

"Why," he exclaimed with the old smile, "can it be little Olive?"

"It is little Olive," she answered in something like a flutter; "and you are Emerson Courtright! I never hoped to see you again."

"Again!" he rejoined, leading her to a seat. "May you see me a thousand times! Oh, it brings back the days when I was an honest pioneer, and kept the Dearwester school. Good old times!"

"When you were special instructor in Italian method and *belles lettres* of evenings," she added, "to a certain little black-a-vized bumpkin who shall be nameless; but who has never forgotten the lessons, or ceased to get good from them."

"I'll tell you about that, now that we've alluded to it," he replied, in the manner of one making a confession. "I did the whole thing for my own selfish purposes, and because I wanted to brush up, and you were too bright to let any errors pass, and really did the teaching yourself. But, my goodness, Olive, how you've grown!"

"Indeed?" quizzically. "Well, one does grow, after the teens come."

"Yes, one does, one does," he agreed, "however you construe 'teens.' In the old sense, maybe they promote growth; but you don't look as if you could say much about that, my child, and I hope you never may."

"I guess I've never had more teen in the old sense than is good for one," she said, "but in the newer one, you who put my age on the school register can

testify that I have had all I shall ever see. You must keep my secret."

"Inviolably!" he vowed expansively; "but, dear me, you're a young lady! I mustn't call you Olive any more—"

"Don't stop it on my account," she protested, "I beg of you. I've never been able to acquire dignity."

Mr. Courtright looked at her more intently, to see if her statement were true, to catch the meaning, if he might, of the note of personality which womanhood had mingled with the intense and almost wild harmonies of her girlhood.

"I am quite sure you do yourself injustice, in that," he said. "May I tell you how much you have bettered my roseate predictions as to your grown-up estate?"

"Since my father was director, and you boarded with us," she answered, blushing a little, "the other children thought you bound to be partial to me. I'm afraid you still are; but, thank you, nevertheless."

"And your father? Is he—"

"He left us a year or so after you—after you went away," she answered with a little sharp intake of the breath. "Mama and I have been alone ever since."

"I hope," said Emerson softly, after contemplating for a few moments the mental picture of the widow and the little girl, the wide prairie and the loneliness, "that all is well with you; and that your mother—how she cared for me!—is as well and keen and refreshing as she used to be."

"Mama's quite well," answered Olive, "and we get on famously. And you—tell me about yourself. I have never heard a word since that one letter you wrote."

"Better off than I deserve," said he. "You don't live on the prairie any more?"

"No, we sold the land and moved to Madison. Mama had a sister there, and the university drew us. I'm just through."

"You still sing? Why, of course!" he said. "This is your business card. I forgot that."

"All our hopes," she answered, "are embarked in that one little cockle-shell of a ship, my music. Do you know the president of Tudor College, Doctor Jones?"

"Oh, yes," he answered; "I expect to lecture for him, on some historical subjects: splendid man, and building up a fine school."

"I am glad to hear it," answered Olive, "for I have the tiniest of positions—from a financial standpoint—in the college. So we are to be fellow-members of the faculty. I want to get a church position, and I heard that there is a soprano place vacant here. I came to see the pastor."

"I'm the pastor," said he.

Perhaps in no age except ours, since Peter and Paul went out to convert the Gentiles, would this sort of announcement under the same conditions have produced in the mind of an average girl like Olive Dearwester the impression it made on her. Time was, when to be the mother or wife of a minister or priest was an honor acknowledged on bended knees. Time was, when the most exalted expectations regarding a young man's future would have been felt by any young woman—especially by a church-member like Olive—as abundantly realized on finding him the successful pastor of a great congregation. But that was

when people took their preaching and their churches more seriously than now, when an Athanasius could convulse an empire, a Peter lead a crusade, a Savonarola rule a republic, a Saint Francis carry hope to the poor. It was when their sacerdotal relations went to the very roots of their lives, and affected profoundly their very eating and drinking and laboring and property-holding, and the frame of their government. Then the preacher had his hands deep in the kneading-trough of real life, and his fulminations rocked society. In such circumstances Olive Dearwester would have seen in Emerson Courtright's profession the explanation and intensification of that Shechinah.

But, now, it must be confessed, she looked upon the powerful figure, the splendid head and the lambent eyes, and, unconsciously, she became apologetic for him toward the world, because he was not really in the thick of the fray and on the fighting-line where things are done. What she said, though, was this:

"Oh, I am so glad! For I have heard, so many times, that it is the greatest church with the most wonderful pastor in the city!"

"You hear the kind words only," said he, glowing. "But we are very critical about our music. Please sing for me, so I may know if my little prima donna has really profited by my instruction."

Opening the piano, she ran her fingers lightly and caressingly over the keys with the accuracy born of the fever for mastery which had impelled her to paste the paper keys on her desk, in the old days, and practise soundless sonatas upon them; with the intensity, even in the pianissimo, born of the artist's

ear which hears the thronging voices in the harmonies and joys to body them forth. *There is a Green Hill Far Away* was rendered rather constrainedly—but sometimes he felt the lift and surge of the great voice. Then came the old *But the Lord is Mindful of His Own*, so steady and quiet as to seem only a sort of sublime and tender speech, and giving very little hint of the plangent grandeur of her *Inflammatus* from the *Stabat Mater* which followed. Then she lessened the stress in a little ballad-like *Religioso*, almost like a lullaby, and finished with Tours' pathetic story-song, *The New Kingdom*. Courtright sat entranced. He saw the two little orphans, knowing home only as richer children know Heaven, shivering on that side of life which takes naught but the cold blast, but making the most of the one thing warm and good they possessed—love. And as the music of the voice, sweet, clear, full, and vibrating with maternal passion, carried his thought over to the touch of Azrael which gave them their home in the City not made with hands, it was the poet, and not the preacher in him, which made it necessary for him to stand looking out of the window, struggling for self-command, his eyes bathed in tears.

Evidently she was not unused to such effects upon her auditors; for when she had finished, and saw him so standing in that transparent ruse, as if concealing the thing most to his credit, she waited, falling naturally into the routine work of the student of the piano. A few scales, some arpeggios, and then a running finger-exercise, all done with that same precision of touch, and then the hands ran off into more complex progressions and modulations, and finally she became

lost to her surroundings in some nocturne-like improvisation.

Mr. Courtright returned and leaned over the piano, studying the girl. Amy Bloodgood saw them thus as she came in at the open door at William's bidding. Emerson Courtright was leaning over the piano, looking intently at a young woman who, with extraordinary skill, and an odd, caressing touch, quite different from that commonly taught, was playing some unending melody, supported by strange and seemingly unstudied harmonies. She was a tall girl, well but plainly dressed, in a costume, the only trace of allurements in which was the V cut of the neck. She was of a pure olive complexion, and possessed a figure which would have rendered the attempted deception transparent had she essayed the rôle of Rosalind or Viola. Her waist was slender, her arms full and round and tapering to flexile wrists, and to fingers, nimble, but plump and not long. Her hair, a great mass crowning a shapely head, was black as night, and made the olive skin look pale by contrast. Her eyes might have belonged to a Syrian maiden, so deeply, wonderfully large and dark they were, with a darkness like that coming from great abysses of depth, like the desert spaces in the Milky Way, rather than from absence of light—a darkness full of invisible rays of attractive energy. There was something formidable, almost stately, in the fine, strong form, the strange, haunting, oval face with the rapt expression, as she queened it over the piano. Moreover, she was young, a stranger, in Emerson's study, and both were so engrossed that Amy had to move a chair before either noticed her.



"Oh, I'm so glad you've come!" said Emerson, taking Miss Bloodgood's hand and leading her to a chair. "An old friend and pupil of mine has come to take your place in the choir. Miss Bloodgood, this is Miss Dearwester."

Olive half extended her hand, but drew it back as she was aware of the bow to which Amy confined herself in acknowledging the introduction. With words of calm civility, but with glances which might have pierced to the heart, they looked into each other's eyes.

So met Amy Bloodgood and Olive Dearwester.

## CHAPTER V

### STOOPING AND CONQUERING

It is a pity that the great and terrible sage of Weissnichtwo never, in his Clothes-Philosophy, treated of the influence of raiment as an element in subjugation, and thereunder, especially, Of Dress as Affecting the Relations of Women. Now, Olive Dearwester was well enough dressed; but after Amy Bloodgood came, she felt a sense of cheapness and shabbiness in her apparel; and that its stitches were her own and her mother's, degraded them in the foolish girl's—I was about to say mind, but that would be wrong—I think it must have been in the medulla oblongata whence the blind impulses come. Amy's clothes gave forth that costly rustle telling of inward richness, were built on the simple lines that show the handiwork of a man, and displayed an unassuming excellence of fabric and finish which it requires a woman's eye to distinguish from the plainness of economy. Therefore, when Olive sat down to sing again she felt like Blowsalinda singing to the queen: all uncomforted of the fact that in any such competitive examination as that once conducted by Paris of Troy, she would have been first and Amy nowhere.

And yet, not by extrinsic things only was Amy Bloodgood something of a personage. She lacked, it is true, the wealth of personal charms which in due time made Olive Dearwester the delight of photog-

raphers, painters and sculptors; but she was a pretty woman with an aristocratic face, a figure of fine symmetry and poise, and expressive gray eyes. A disdainful little nose she had, and a mouth with a playfully forlorn droop at the corners, and a changeful expression to those who enjoyed intimacy with her.

Olive sang badly—for her; but Miss Bloodgood was pleased to think that she would do, perhaps.

In the midst of the song Mr. John Bloodgood came in for his sister, and Olive's foot almost touched his as she revolved on the stool, after the finale. She looked up in astonishment, her eyes traveling up, up over his much more than six feet of perfectly clothed gauntness, to the smooth-shaven face with the heavy jaws, hard angles and harsh mouth since made popular by the author of *The Education of Mr. Pipp*.

Olive rose blushing; Mr. Bloodgood stepped back bowing.

"I shall rely on you next Sunday, then, Miss Dearwester?" said Amy questioningly.

"Having trampled on Miss Dearwester's toes," said Mr. Bloodgood, "I should like to be presented, so that I may have a chance to correct the impression I've made."

"My brother, Mr. Bloodgood, Miss Dearwester," said Amy. "He's extremely awkward."

"You made no impression at all—on the toes," said Olive, "and it was my fault anyhow, Mr. Bloodgood."

"Really, it was," answered Mr. Bloodgood gravely. "Your voice held me spellbound."

"That effect gradually wears off," Olive replied with equal seriousness. "Yes, Miss Bloodgood, I'll not fail



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you on Sunday, although it will be hard to be ready. Where is that bank, Mr. Courtright—three blocks west, one south? I can find my way alone, easily, thank you, Mr. Bloodgood, and I have some shopping to do.”

The bank for which Miss Dearwester inquired was the place of business of young Mr. Dewey, chairman of the music committee, to whom Mr. Courtright had given her a letter.

“She’ll do very nicely,” remarked Amy, after Olive was well gone.

“Do!” exclaimed her brother with unwonted enthusiasm. “Do! I should think she would do! She’s all sorts of things delectable and saccharine. Where’d you find her?”

“She’s an old friend and pupil of mine,” replied Emerson. “I used to carry her through snow-drifts and hold her on my knee when she was a little girl, and I was an honest farmer and teacher, away out in the buffalo-grass beyond the end of your Angus Falls line. She’s our new soprano. She comes of a family of good people who were very kind to me.”

“They were,” responded Mr. Bloodgood, “if they let you hold her on your knee and carry her through snow-drifts. As a railroad man, I hate blockades; but if she still has that snow-drift habit, I’m hoping for a hard winter. Oh, she’s forgotten her handkerchief; I’ll run and return it!”

“Jack Bloodgood,” exclaimed Amy, “you stole that handkerchief out of her shopping-bag; you know you did! And we all know why. Now, no nonsense, Jack; she’s an old friend of Emerson’s.”

“Yes, but Emerson’s got his hands full,” laughed

Jack. "By-by, I'm off." And he ran down the steps with the handkerchief.

As the sound of Mr. Bloodgood's steps lessened in the distance, Emerson stood, feasting his eyes upon the well-bred and dainty figure of Mr. Bloodgood's sister. William, the sexton, and William's wife were down below in the region of the heating plant, and they in the study were alone. Emerson took Mr. Bloodgood's dainty and well-bred sister in his arms quite with the air of a man of the world, and kissed her so many times upon her well-bred and dainty lips that she buried her face on his shoulder at last, and then looked at the open door with such a charming assumption of the clandestine that he repeated the venial sin.

"Stop!" said she. "I remember, I'm 'mad' at you; and that's the last one, for punishment!"

The daughter of a hundred Bloodgoods volunteered the last instalment of veniality. So Emma avouched her surrender to Eginhard; and never since that time was there more maddening testimony, more complete abandonment of the *grande dame* reserve. Let us pass on; with the unyouthful reflection that these ecstasies come seldom, and they last not long, and that society, from section man to wherever the top is, would all go daft *en masse*, if they never cooled. Pshaw! Let us be frank. All the world loves a lover far less than all the world envies him.

"Punish me some more, sweetheart," begged Emerson; "and after punishment, condemn me, try me, and at last tell me the crime, *à la Alice Through the Looking-glass!*"

"It's all right, dear," she responded; "but don't let

it happen again—finding you perusing the oval features of such a violently brunette person as Miss Dearwester—or blonde, or medium, or any one!”

To Amy, this was half serious; but to Emerson, it was a whimsical joke, a charming ebullition of utter blithesomeness.

“But aren’t you glad she appeared, just as we need her?” he cried. “How do you like her?”

“Oh, she’s so much better than the others,” responded Amy, confining the scope of the inquiry to the matter of the music; “and if she could have had such training as Mademoiselle St. Cyr gives, she could have been developed into a fine singer. What a big voice for a little room like this!”

Emerson wished she might have heard *The New Kingdom*, but he had too much tact to say so. It may throw some light upon the question of the sort of mind he had, to know that, in spite of his lovesickness, he was of the opinion that, in fire, in color, and in power to move, the new soprano’s music would be an improvement upon that of Mademoiselle St. Cyr’s star pupil. It would be better, however, to dwell upon the delicious thought that Amy was leaving the choir to prepare for the wedding, and to read her the letter from the great Doctor Bovee, congratulating him upon his engagement, and offering to come and officiate at the ceremony.

The Bloodgoods were making the best of it, as we may see from the behavior of Jack toward his sister’s fiancé. But Emerson knew that they were not at all pleased with Amy’s choice. Judge Bloodgood, while quite unable to define to Amy the reasons of his opposition, had yielded reluctantly, after a long struggle.



As a matter of fact, he knew the reason, but he dared not express it, because the putting of it in words involved the denial of one of his pet conventional attitudes. He knew that the ascendancy of the church had ceased long ago, and that his father's choosing the law instead of *his* father's profession of the ministry was a recognition by the keenly practical mind of the Bloodgoods that such was the case. He also saw that Jack's choice of the railway as his friend was a bowing to the fact that the control of the world, in America at least, had passed from the law to the engineer and to the lord of the highway. But a Bloodgood, a United States judge, and a consistent member of a religious denomination in which his ancestors had made themselves great as priests, could not say to his daughter that, in marrying a preacher, she was allying herself to a supernumerary, a sort of higher club servant, a survival of the old days of virile priesthoods, in an age when the pulpit has become the pliant utensil of the great and forceful men who rule the world through their control of material things. Yet, this is what Judge Bloodgood thought: and no one will fail to see the analogy between his attitude and the unreasoning impression of disappointment in Olive Dearwester, when Emerson said to her, "I am the pastor."

In fact, Amy herself had not been without a clear, if unexpressed, understanding of this unmentionable attitude of contempt toward the clergy (not to use too strong a term) on the part of her class. It was a part of the very atmosphere in which she had been reared, the respect for wealth, the feeling that religion was, after all, a thing which must not presume to interfere with wealth, its getting or its spending. But,

strong as such a social instinct is in a woman, in Amy there was something stronger still: she wanted Emerson Courtright. So she subtly took up the argument for the commanding importance of the clergyman's position, not because she believed strongly that her position was correct, but for the reason that thereby she took ground on which she had her father at a disadvantage. And she won. No doubt she would have won without this intellectual fencing, for the days of shutting up recalcitrant daughters of mature years are over; but Amy won completely, bringing off the field as a trophy her parents' promise to be good to Emerson. And as they stood in the study, deliciously afraid that some one would come to the door suddenly and surprise them, Amy was too happy to doubt the wisdom of her choice.

"Oh, mommie, mommie!" cried Olive, "we've done it! We've scored! I've got the best church position anywhere, and who do you think is pastor?"

"Oh, I've found out all about it," answered Mrs. Dearwester, a little fleshier than of yore, and white-haired, but still erect and vivacious. "I've got more gossip out of our landlady than a week's board would come to. I should judge that the service at the First Church, now, is worship of Emerson Courtright. Did you see him?"

"M'h'm, I saw him."

"Is he as good-looking as ever?"

"Better," said Olive. "You'll see him to-morrow. We're going to move; we can afford to, now. And Emerson—Mr. Courtright—recommended us to his boarding-house, or it to us, and we're going there—a

fine place where we can have a bath-room. Won't that be great?"

"Emerson and the bath-room; cleanliness next to godliness," said her mother. "Well, child, you have done well; and it won't hurt us any to have things brighten up a little. How did the vacancy happen?"

"A Miss Bloodgood is resigning for some reason," replied Olive. "If she sings as well as she dresses, they'll notice a falling off in the music. I think she's one of the rich sort, who sing for the sake of the good act, and can afford to."

"Oh, I know who she is," said her mother; "that's a part of the gossip. She's away up in the world, and Emerson's going to marry her in a month or so. What's she like?"

"Well," said Olive slowly, and suddenly very much engrossed in the arrangement of her front hair before the dresser, with her back to her mother, "she's very stylish, and has had the best of advantages, I should say. She dresses perfectly. She is reserved and a little formal—exclusive, I should suppose, socially. And, yes, she's pretty—good form, nice eyes, and not bad features otherwise—only her nose is a little bit snippy, you know. Her complexion needs a lot of care to keep it good. Altogether, I like her very much; but, honestly, she is not a bit the girl I should have imagined such a man—so much of a man—falling in love with."

How this sentiment would have puzzled Judge Bloodgood, could he only have overheard it!

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MAN WHO WAS IT

It is not at all strange that during the joyful week of the wedding of Amy and Emerson there called at the marvelous boarding-house with the bath-room which could be afforded, a suave, smily and oily person whose name was Feek, and who said he was agent for a cottage which would just suit Miss Dearwester, being large enough for both studio and dwelling, and "close in"—by which Mr. Feek meant not far from the business center of the town; neither is it at all remarkable that the mother and daughter were in a very short time domiciled there. Taken in connection with the episode of the stolen handkerchief, however, these facts may be not without significance: Mr. Feek was claim agent for the Halliday System, and Mr. Bloodgood's confidential man; and the cottage was one of the Bloodgood properties. Evidently, too, it was a property dear to Mr. John Bloodgood's heart; for the time which he devoted to its improvement and decoration would seem out of proportion to its value.

"I wonder if this railroad of his," said Mrs. Dearwester one day, "has any track or cars or engines?"

Olive was sitting by the piano, the recently vacated chair of Mr. Bloodgood at her elbow.

"What a question, mommie," said she; "we came in on it."

"Oh, did we?" rejoined Mrs. Dearwester dryly.

"What I was thinkin' is that judgin' from the time it takes him to look after one little cottage it wouldn't take many miles of real railroad to keep him hoppin' right lively."

"Don't you want him to come, ma?" asked Olive after a long pause.

The reversion to "ma" from "mommie" warned her mother that the conversation had become serious. An acquired manner never becomes adequate to the expression of earnestness. The appliqué habit disappears on the higher levels of feeling.

"Well, you're both of age," answered Mrs. Dearwester, "and single, I guess; and I don't know why he should be shown the door. But his comin' here don't appeal to me a very great deal."

"You're quite an oracle," said Olive smilingly, "both in the wisdom and the mistiness of what you say. I'll tell Mr. Bloodgood when he calls again, 'You are not to come again; you don't appeal to mama.' He'll see your position in a minute."

Mrs. Dearwester cleared the matter up by telling her to wait and see. This was quite in her usual manner.

Mr. Courtright, who, to her, was still "Emerson" as of old, came often to see his old friend, after he and Amy were cozily settled in their new home. She almost always had a side-light to throw upon his roseate anticipations as to his future, and usually there was something of the damp and chill in these subacid observations. Seeing the wheat cut down by hail, and the corn burned up by hot winds year after year, may have given her this deep-seated distrust of optimism. One evening Emerson had been telling her that

now he had nothing left to hope for in the way of professional advancement except a call to some great pulpit in New York, Boston or Chicago; and that this was sure to come sooner or later.

"Well," answered Mrs. Dearwester, "I s'pose it's all right to look forward to. I don't remember that the Lord ever tried to get Himself nominated for High Priest to succeed Caiaphas; but times seem to be different now from what they were when folks were commanded to take no thought for the morrow."

Emerson laughed indulgently. She was, perhaps, the only member of his church who ever took issue with him, and he liked it.

"You don't think it any violation of the law of right living, do you?" he asked.

"I don't pretend to have any views," said Mrs. Dearwester; "but I notice that when folks get their patchwork life all laid out, along comes something and jerks the corner of the quilt-frames, an' away they go. You're too young to have your life all time-tabled this way—it ain't seasonable. If you plant your corn in April, it rots in the ground or gets frosted after it sprouts. If you wait till June, it gets nipped in the roastin'-ear. You can't bet that it's corn-plantin' time until the white oak leaves are out the size of a squirrel's foot. I hope it's really spring with you; but it looks powerful early to me. And you're no better to have troubles than other folks."

"That's so," he assented; "not a bit better."

"It sort of looks to me," went on Mrs. Dearwester, "as if you were on the top of the mountain, looking over the kingdoms of the earth, a-pickin' out your capital city. I don't see as there's any devil you're

asked to worship; but there generally is one, I notice."

"Don't croak, mommie!" cried Olive, busy copying music. "You are almost making an argument for failure—and you and I are interested on the other side."

"Oh, I ain't making any argument," disclaimed her mother, "I don't pretend to have any views; but sometimes nothing succeeds like failure. And I always feel some doubtful of these pure-quill successes. Now you're gettin' a great name as a revivalist, Emerson. You and Olive are goin' up to Angus Falls in a day or two, to hold meetin's. Your big city pulpit is on one line, your evangelistic work on another. Which track are you goin' to follow?"

"Oh, that will clear itself up, no doubt," answered Emerson after a long silence. "They wouldn't want me nearly so badly, if it weren't for Olive's singing. And some one will take her from us one of these days."

Mr. Courtright glanced sharply at Olive, but saw no change in her countenance.

"You must have heard," said Mrs. Dearwester, "about that opera man?"

"No," replied Mr. Courtright. "What do you mean?"

"She means Mr. McAndrew of the Athenians," answered Olive. "His advance man heard me sing one Sunday, and wrote him about me, after talking to me about it. He wants to hear me sing when they come here. Of course I shan't please him."

"It looks as if we were all comin' to the forks of the road," observed Mrs. Dearwester.

It may be as well to say here, that Mr. McAndrew of the Athenians—that veteran discoverer of singers—thought well enough of Olive to offer her a place in the chorus, with the promise of better things as soon as she should prove herself worthy of them.

“They say a great many things about the stage, my dear,” said he, “which are all true and all false. I don’t advise you to accept, but, if you’re foreordained to take the plunge, the Athenians offer you a nice medium to sink or to swim in.”

“I’ll talk it over with my mother,” said Olive discreetly.

“Good thought,” observed Mr. McAndrew, scribbling “Pass 2 Mc” on a slip of paper. “Bring your mother to hear *Carmen* to-night.”

Mrs. Dearwester’s observation of the opera was, no doubt, more keen and critical this night than ever before, especially as to the things required of the chorus. She said nothing until their return home.

“I don’t think I’m quite ready, yet,” said she, “to see my girl romping up and down behind the footlights without clothes enough on to flag a hand-car with, and her heels half the time where her head ought to be—not just yet!”

“I don’t think you get the proper light on it,” said Olive. “To the pure all things are pure; and all singers have to begin in the chorus.”

“They acted like they was a-beginning something,” said her mother. “When the pure sit in the front rows with the opera-glasses, I’ll give in.”

“I should be absorbed in my music,” asserted Olive disdainfully. “I should never think of them!”

“Well, the oblivion wouldn’t be mutual,” rejoined



her mother. "We won't leave Emerson Courtright and the choir in the lurch just yet, I guess."

"Mr. Courtright," answered Olive chillingly, "is quite able to take care of himself; but, of course, we'll do as you say, ma."

People who knew Mrs. Dearwester were always looking for the fulfilment of her half-prophecies; and therefore, Emerson could not dismiss from his mind her vague forecasts as to his future. It was this prophecy which started the train of thought relating to prophecy in general, which led to a vesper sermon the next Sunday—a prose poem upon the text: *Neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.*

On this the young orator founded a discourse, showing how all sorrow and crying and pain come from sin, and how, when every man shall cleanse himself from it, the world shall be transfigured into glory. He told how, in such merely temporal matters as cleanliness, universal purity can come only from the purity of each person, there being no such thing as collective purity; how, if each man clears the walk in front of his own property, the whole city thereby is cleared; how diseases are exterminated by the general adoption by individuals of proper modes of life; how universal good taste makes the City Beautiful; and, finally, in a burst of poetic description, how by the universal adoption, by individual souls, of the life taught by Jesus, the beatitude of the vision of Patmos, as described in the text, might come to human society, under its present organization. Then came one of those rhapsodies which always sent his congregation away entranced. He grew mystical in his tracing

of sympathies between even inanimate nature and the soul of man.

“Day is sometimes born,” said he, “in a glory of roseate blush and golden gleam; sometimes in a travail of groaning, wailing wind behind a pall of sable or gray, amid weeping of rain and mist. Day sometimes dies to the dirge of storm-blast, the searing conscience-stab of lightning, the hoarse condemning of thunder; sometimes pink-tinted swan’s-down of cloud, rose-and-gold coruscations from beyond the gates of sunset, gentle requiem of evening breeze, and the comforting ‘Well done’ of the cooling dew make sweet its peaceful death.

“The face of nature is sometimes too sad for tears or groans or sighs; sometimes too glad for smiles or laughter or hallelujahs.

“The prophet knew that man makes it so. Every frown makes clouds and darkness; every word or deed of anger reappears in lightning, echoes and reverberates in thunder; and mist and cold and snow follow the evil deeds of man. But every smile reflects in splendor of sky, glory of fleecy cloudlet; every good deed bears fruit in sunny shower and cooling dew and sighing breeze.

“As a man grows better, nature will grow toward the state in which the river of the water of life flows beneath the sky in which there is no need of sun or moon, between the banks on which grows the tree with the twelve manner of fruit. The earth will grow more kindly; and when she laughs to feel upon her long-suffering bosom the tread of perfect, regenerated man, he shall be found walking among scenes of transcendent beauty, under skies the glory of which is now

only faintly foreshadowed by painters' dreams. The hills shall be clothed in verdure, the waters with rippling smiles, the fields with floral splendor. Morn shall come forth rosy with blushes, radiant with gold. And evening, to the quiet music of flocks and herds and rustling breezes, shall, with lessening glory and deepening peace, fold her starry robe around the earth—and man shall not need to ask, in waking or dreaming, 'Where is Heaven?' ”

When they got home that evening—it had been a vesper service—Amy put up her lips to be kissed by this wonderful husband, who could so ravish people away from the sordid cares of this sublunary life. Emerson bestowed the caress absently, being in that state of revulsion which must follow the exaltation of the finely strung nature. Therefore he kissed her as one not seeing, and, after a while, when she had retired with a headache, he walked forth upon the street alone, and made his way down to see the business district in its Sunday night guise.

On one corner after another were little crowds of people standing before the closed shops, listening to the fervid exhortations of street preachers, reminding him that a Booth had given to the world something new in religious work. He heard the braying of horns, the clang of cymbals and beat of drums, and the vociferous singing of hymns. He compared with the churchly gravity and artistic finish of his own regular services, the rude style of the singers and speakers here on the streets. He wondered if his own revival manner had not something in common with theirs. He marked the queer unconcern of most of the auditors, standing with their hats on during

prayers, puffing at their pipes or cigars, coming and going at will, while the drums beat, the cymbals rent the air, the horns blared, the tambourines rattled, and in song or speech the "soldiers of the cross" shouted "Come to Jesus! Come to Jesus! Come now!"

"Salvation used to be free, only," he thought. "But now it seems to be almost compulsory—forced down people's throats at every corner. Well, well, it may be all right—but here's something rather different!"

Just around a turning from a Salvation Army meeting was a knot of some score or more of men, closely crowded about a box on which stood a man who was talking rapidly and with great intensity. A sentence uttered by him, in a colloquy with an elderly workingman, a member of Emerson's congregation, made personal and definite his casual and wandering attention.

"Yes," was the remark, "I was there. I heard this great sermon about the redemption of society by poppycock, this flubdub about golden sunsets and fleecy cloudlets, preached into the ears of the people while their pockets are being picked and their livings made harder to get by the great pew-owners."

Emerson started, recognizing some of his own poetic phrases. He peered over the heads of the crowd at the speaker, and tried to catch his parishioner's answer; but heard only a confused jumble of rejoinder. Neither could he make out the man's face; but in the stocky figure, or the set of the head, or in the ring of the voice, there was something curiously familiar.

"You say," he went on, "that the evils of poverty, now so rapidly on the increase in this country, until

it is a recognized fact, practically undenied, that we are surely passing into the same industrial conditions as those of Europe—that this poverty, about which so many books are now being written, may be cured by putting into practice the principles of the gospel. Would you be so kind as to be more explicit, and tell us how?”

“I mean,” said the elderly man, standing by his guns, “that if folks will be honest, and work at any job they can get, and stay away from the saloons, there is a good living for every industrious man.”

“Thank you,” replied the speaker, “I think I see your point. I won’t raise the question of how much better living a worker is entitled to while producing with modern machinery over that made in old times by mere hand-work; but will go right to your point of making a living—not a mere existence, but a sufficiency of food, clothing and shelter for wife and family, education for the children, and a competence for old age. Industry, sobriety, and thrift, you say, will give these to all. I think no error can be more complete. I make the statement that if every man in the world were suddenly to become a total abstainer, with a mania for work, a miser’s appetite for saving, and a perfect church record, the masses would be poorer than now.”

Emerson was astounded at such a statement, and still more so by cries of “That’s so!” and “You’re right!” from the crowd.

“A good character in a workman,” went on the speaker, “helps him in his struggle with poverty only as it makes him better than his fellows—just as this box I stand on makes me able to see farther

than you can; if you should all get boxes, mine would do me no good. We bid against each other for jobs, and run the price of our own bodies—for we consume them in our work—down to a mere living, however *mere* it may be. Thrift and industry and temperance are good things; but they are good from the standpoint of wages in proportion, only, as they are rare. If all the tramps in the country were crazy for work, they couldn't get it, except by crowding some one else out. I'll tell you the remedy pretty soon—there is one; but now I'm answering my friend here. The masses are flim-flammed by the temperance workers and the Atkinsons with their 'economy cookers,' and the professional optimists, generally, into putting the blame anywhere but the right place: but the greatest bunco game, economically speaking, is the gospel bunco—a sample of the lingo of which some of us have heard this afternoon. Your high-priced preachers wear silk gowns or broadcloth, and come into their rich temples of a new paganism, rubbed down and groomed like the rest of the animals kept for the amusement of the wealthy, and preach morphine into the systems of robbed working-people—and most of them do it, I suppose, thinking that they're serving the Lord. You have them in this town, telling you, in beautiful language, that this social iniquity may be cured by individual righteousness without hurting any one's interests. You'll find their portrait in the Book of Jude, where it says: *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.* Oh, they feed themselves, all right!

“And then,” went on the speaker, waiting for the

laughter to subside, "it calls them *clouds without water*—friends, did you ever see it cloud up, as if for rain, when you just had to have rain or lose your year's work, and then see the wind dissipate and blow the clouds away, while you looked at the hot sky despairingly with parched eyelids? *I have; and, yes, you, brother, who nod your head there, you've been there, too. And that's what the clergy are to-day, clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. . . . Murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.* All this I quote from Jude.

"*Great swelling words*, friends, now, as of old. Women walk the streets to-night, here in Lattimore, looking into men's faces and saying, 'Won't you buy me? won't you buy me?' on account of poverty made by laws!"

Emerson's resentment flamed up at this monstrous attack, and to a blue-coated policeman, who had been standing for some moments looking upon the scene with an air of great disfavor, he whispered, "Has this man a right to stand here and talk such things?" The officer, as if in obedience to an order from Emerson, stepped forward to the speaker's side.

"Your poverty may rest on particular people," the speaker continued, "by reason of their individual characteristics—drunkenness, indolence, wastefulness, if you please—just as in a shipwreck, where there are not

life-preservers for all, the slothful and weak and inactive must drown; but just so many would have to drown, anyhow, for lack of life-preservers. And the same mass of poverty would exist anyhow, if we were all perfect workmen, with our present shipwreck-making laws, and with all roads to self-employment fenced up and monopolized. And, in the face of this, you have a false gospel of patience preached to you, by your shepherds *that without fear feed themselves*—the priesthood of Mammon.”

“Here!” roared the big voice of the officer. “Let up on that, you!”

The speaker paused, seemingly in no way surprised, and surveyed the bluecoat calmly.

“Well,” said he, “and what seems to be the matter with *you*?”

“Now, don’t you get gay with *me*,” answered the policeman, flushing at the quiet contempt of the remark. “Have you got a permit to stand here and talk?”

“The streets are free,” said the speaker. “I’m not obstructing them.”

“Well, you can’t stand on my beat,” responded the policeman, “and talk anarchy and socialism, and attack the church, and jump on to the city government—and then dish up any of your lip to me!”

Emerson found himself pressing forward with the rest of the crowd, his heart beating with the excitement of feeling that he was about to become responsible for this man’s arrest, possibly. For the first time, he got a good view of the man’s face—a bronzed and weather-beaten countenance, covered with a stubble of beard, and lighted by brown eyes with the glint



of defiance in them—and again that sense of familiarity in the atmosphere of the man struck his mind.

“I’m saying only what I have a right to say,” said the stranger, “and I’m going on, unless you stop me by force.”

“All right!” shouted the officer. “You just try it on, and you’ll see!”

“Is it what I said about the church,” the man asked, “or the anarchy, or the socialism—I don’t remember either—or the city government, or what, that makes you so hot under the collar?”

“You come along with me!” roared the policeman. “And you’ll go in the wagon, my friend: here, Bill, turn in a call!”

“I’ll be back here to-morrow evening if I get out of jail,” said the agitator; “and then I’ll finish my speech. Come one, come all!”

“We will!” cried some one.

“Shut up!” ordered the policeman, seizing the man’s arm, “and get into this patrol wagon!”

The wagon thundered up, horses galloping, bell clanging, people running to see; and the weather-beaten man, with the brown eyes, was loaded up and carried off, in all the pomp and circumstance of vindicated law.

Emerson went away, pensive. He had a good deal the same feeling which had haunted him for days, as a boy, when a chance cast of a stone into a flock of blackbirds had sent one of them away with a broken leg—a sense of having done a cruel thing. The man was not obstructing the street, he was right about that. What he had said was cruel and untrue; but if he believed it to be true, who, in this free land,

had the right to put him in prison for saying it? Emerson's father had often talked to him of the death of Lovejoy, and the dragging of Garrison through the streets by a mob, because they had said things about slavery. This man, with the familiar look and the brown eyes, seemed to be in earnest, and had gone to prison for saying something.

Moreover, would the officer have arrested him, had it not been for Emerson's outflash of temper, and his appeal to the policeman? What sort of bed was he sleeping upon, at the station? Had they really imprisoned him? Who was it that spoke of visiting those in prison, as a good man's duty?

By the time Emerson had turned these things over so many times in his mind that he felt that he could endure inaction no longer, it was morning, and the newsboy was making his rounds with the morning paper. Mr. Courtright turned to the police column.

"A single-tax agitator," it ran, "was arrested by Patrolman Duggan at the corner of Adams Street and Missouri Avenue last night. He was violent, and, on being spoken to by Officer Duggan, became disrespectful, and was given an illustration of the comforts of municipally owned transportation facilities, by a ride in the patrol wagon. He says he is from the short-grass country, and gives the name of Morgan Yeager. Detective Schlitz is looking up his record, and thinks he may belong to the Haymarket gang of Chicago, or the Paterson (N. J.) group. It is thought that Judge Phelan will make an example of some of these outside agitators before long. Mr. Yeager may serve his country by being It."

## CHAPTER VII

### "A LOOK INTO THE GULF"

"Good morning, your Reverence," said the desk sergeant. He spoke to Emerson, but used the title his education had laid nearest to hand.

Emerson gave him back the time of day, and then paused from the sheer embarrassment of the situation: for he was not a slumming parson.

"Step in behind the railing," said the sergeant kindly, "and take a seat, sir."

Emerson accepted the invitation. The gloomy façade of the police station had depressed his spirits as he surveyed it from the street; and now, though everything looked clean, he was sickened by an offensive and almost acrid smell which no one else seemed to notice. Rouged women in bedraggled finery were coming down the stairway, their rolling eyes darting glances into those of all comers, their plumed millinery tossed swaggeringly, their faces writhen into mechanical smiles. They reminded him of something the street speaker had said last night. And over all persisted that penetrating and offensive scent which no one else seemed to notice, a smell then new to him, but which he afterward came to know so well as the "prison smell"—the feter emanating from prisoned human beings, the horrible and mysterious effluvium of crime and oppression.

A captain asked if there was anything he could do for Mr. Courtright.

"Er—yes," said he. "The fact is, Captain Comiskey, I believe—it may be—a man arrested last night is an old acquaintance of mine—a friend; I should like—"

"To see him?" asked the captain. "Why, certainly, Mr. Courtright. What is he pinched—er, apprehended for?"

"For disrespect to Officer Duggan, I think it was," answered Emerson doubtfully.

"That may be the crime," laughed the captain. "But the charge on the blotter will be different, I presume. I know whom you mean, though. His case has not been called yet, and if you will come up, you can see him. Did you say he was a friend of yours?"

Emerson "came up" and for the first time saw that spot where the suppressed purulence of the lowest stratum of our social life visibly and noisomely suppurates—the police court. He went in at a side door, where he could look over the room from the front. About him stood the witnesses for the government, uniformed officers, mostly, with a sprinkling of ordinary citizens. A lachrymose sniff at his side drew his attention to a woman in wretched clothing, who wore a bandage over one eye, carried one baby in her arms, and led another, hoisted painfully a-tiptoe by the hand. She was the recipient of meaning glares from a sodden brute on the front bench—clearly her husband, from whose violence she had, at some time in the night, appealed to the police for protection: wherefore she seemed now keenly regretful—pitifully and remorsefully regarding her oppressor

whom, spaniel-like, she loved. Half a dozen dirty and helpless-looking wretches of the tramp variety sat on the front benches, and interspersed among them were the victims of drink, ranging all the way from the plain drunk in woeful collapse, to the drunk and disorderly with the blood still oozing from the head broken by the policeman's club. Two or three negro women had places among the prisoners—their wool bleached to a sandy blond in a grotesque and ghastly effort to imitate the badge of dishonor of the white members of their ancient sisterhood—the kennel aping the sewer. One of these was very young and almost white, and was following with great interest the questions and answers in the examination of a middle-aged man, with his gray mustache unskillfully colored black, who seemed to be testifying that she had stolen money from him. He was dressed in new, but cheap, "store-clothes," wore a flowered waistcoat over a soft-roll dark flannel shirt in which was screwed a big diamond pin. His watch-chain was a golden bridle-bit, from which dangled a golden steer. Clearly this was a back-country villager, a live-stock man—Emerson remembered the type, from his range-country experiences.

Equally clearly, the sympathies of the crowd were against him, as that disgusting object the "cheap skate" and "short sport"; but, at the same time, they were not exactly with the negress, who, while fearful of punishment, was evidently not ill-pleased with her present position in the spot-light of the only stage she ever hoped to appear upon, as she greeted the chief points in her accuser's story with: "My Gawd, heah that!" "Ah nevah saw his money!"

"Ask him whah he took the money fum foh the champagne!" and the like.

Between this woman and a tattered and wild-looking vagrant, sat Morgan Yeager. Emerson's conscience smote him anew, as he thought of the part he suspected himself to have had in placing his good old friend in this degrading, humiliating, nauseating position, this place the stain and smirch of which would never leave him. But Morgan seemed so calm as to appear quite at ease, paying no attention to the squalid drama in the case on trial, which had filled the back benches with a prurient crowd, but trying to talk in whispers with the tramp, upon whose flabby and trembling hand he had laid a firm and warm palm, and to whom he seemed to be trying to convey some message of cheer. Patrolman Duggan stood in the background, somewhat ill at ease with reference to the testimony required to convict this rather rare sort of malefactor.

Slightly differentiated in appearance from the common run of culprits, and conducting the case from seats by a table on which lay a volume of statutes, and some law-books brown with age, sat two lawyers, one of whom took notes and made objections, while the other roared forth the questions of what seemed to be a very cross examination; as if noise alone, could he produce enough of it, would serve to clear the prisoner, as thunder is supposed to affect atmosphere. To him Captain Comiskey whispered a word of apology, at which the roaring Bashan bull turned and nodded assent, the scowl on his red face disappearing, approaching to the normal, and giving place to a smile, as his countenance was averted from

the loathsome witness and brought to bear upon the honored captain; and then repassing through all gradations, from sunny summer morn to midnight tempest, in pivoting back to envisage the village sport on the stand—for all the world, Emerson thought, as if his facial expression depended mechanically upon the position of his head upon his shoulders.

He paused in his examination, while the captain spoke in an undertone to the judge, who was leaning negligently back on the rear legs of his chair, dry-smoking a black cigar, and making paper boats of blank commitments and subpoenas, pads of which lay on the green-topped desk. There was an air of the casual and matter-of-fact in dealing with these momentous issues of crimes against society and the liberty of human beings, which shocked the sensitive conscience of Mr. Courtright.

The magistrate nodded to the captain, and pointed with his thumb into the room through which Emerson had entered. Into this room Emerson went in obedience to a gesture of the captain's: and in a moment, pushed in by Comiskey's huge hand and followed by the closing door, with a wondering look in his brown eyes, came and stood Morgan Yeager—in the beginning, and now once more, Morgan the Waif and the Outcast.

He was still the short and stocky figure of yore, as when he fought the Collinses for the doubtful honor of an unknown mother. Still his eyes had the smoldering fires in them, and his face looked weathered as of old, with more of the red veinlets. His heavy hair, however, was now thickly sprinkled with gray, and his stubby beard dotted with silver; and

about his eyes were the fine wrinkles which register the diary of time spent in the open sunlight in broad and treeless spaces.

"Morgan, my boy!" cried Emerson. "Don't you know me?"

Yeager's fingers closed upon his with an unconscious pressure like that of a vise.

"No," said he, looking the other over, from the enameled shoes to the clerical tie. "No, I don't . . . unless . . . unless you're my old friend Emerson Courtright?"

"I am Emerson Courtright! I saw your arrest—I—said something to the policeman that may have caused him to do it. I didn't think of you until I saw the paper this morning; but I couldn't sleep for thinking of it."

"Were you there last night?"

"Yes, and I was a little put out by what you said about my sermon, and about—"

"*Your* sermon!" cried Morgan. "Are you the minister of the First Church?"

"Yes, I am. But that doesn't make any difference. You didn't recognize me, up there in the chancel. You always were extreme in your views; but I'm sure you meant to say nothing but the truth; and this arrest is an outrage, Morgan, an outrage!"

"I didn't say anything but the truth!" protested the undaunted prisoner. "And as for my arrest being an outrage, it's no more so than the cases of half those people in there"—indicating the court-room whence the thunders of the advocate again rolled. "They're most of them arrested because they are simply poor; or poor, and forced to make a living by



breaking a particular commandment and statute, while respectable people break them all in their respectable way; or poor, and trying to get a gross pleasure from drink, because they can't buy any other. I'm arrested both because I'm poor, and am preaching a remedy for poverty, which the privileged and comfortable classes don't want preached. What's the difference in the outrage?"

"But what crime have you committed?" urged Emerson, ignoring the obdurate challenge to controversy. "None at all. I saw the whole thing—I was present when the officer first spoke—"

"Yes, but wait," said Morgan. "You don't know the resourcefulness of the American police in dealing with the friendless and defenseless. Half the night they had a man suspected of crime in what they call the sweat-box. Do you know what the sweat-box is? It's the American torture-chamber. They take people they want evidence against in there and torture them hour after hour with fierce questioning and intimidation. They lie to the person under torture, trying to make him believe that they know enough to convict him, and that he may as well confess. They tell him that his accomplices have turned state's evidence. The officers take turns in this inquisition, until the prisoner is exhausted and prostrated into confession. And sometimes, when all these expedients fail, they brutally beat him with their fists and with clubs until he tells them what they want to know. Sometimes innocent men, in this modern torture-chamber, as they did in the ancient ones, confess to avoid torture. Don't fear that they won't find an offense to accuse me of. The clerk is examining the ordinance book. 'On the blotter,

I'm accused of 'disturbing the peace'; but the judge knows that won't hold."

"Have you a lawyer?"

"No."

"Let's get one, then, at once."

"No," said Morgan, "not yet. I'm advertising the single tax. It will attract more attention for the tramp to conduct his own defense. Besides, I've just got to town, and am broke. No, thank you," as Emerson's hand went to his pocket, "I'm all right as long as I'm in jail; and when I get out I can work. Just now, I must show up the imprisonment of a man for telling the truth on the street from a dry-goods box, while other men, preaching fables—or—or—another sort of truth, as you may think, are given protection on the same street, at the same hour."

An officer opened the door and beckoned Emerson to an inner room. Here, at a roll-top desk, sat a man wearing a star on which the words "Chief of Police" revealed the czar of the submerged tenth. He was an affable, undersized, smooth-faced, young-looking man, who courteously offered Emerson a seat.

"Good morning, Mr. Courtright," said he. "I wanted to ask what you know of this man Yeager."

"I know that he was arrested without cause," responded Emerson hotly.

"Do you know," asked the chief, "that Patrolman Duggan claims that you procured his arrest?"

Emerson grew hot with shame, now.

"I may be to blame," he admitted; "but, for all that, he was doing no more than the Salvation Army or the Volunteers, or any other street-preaching sect. And I don't believe Mr. Duggan meant to arrest him

until he was angered at Mr. Yeager's reply to his order to stop speaking. Is it a crime to speak as an equal to a policeman?"

"Well," said the chief, "I suppose he *was* obstructing traffic."

"Not at all," answered Emerson—"not half as much as some of the others."

"How long have you know him?" asked the chief.

"Many years—since he was a boy. He was my pupil once."

"You haven't seen him since he was—about how old?"

"About sixteen."

"A man may do a good many things, and change a lot," smiled the chief, "between sixteen and this man's age, Mr. Courtright."

"Yes," replied Emerson, "and he has. He has been a teacher, and a member of the Legislature, and a prominent Populist orator, and—"

"Oh!" exclaimed the chief. "The dev—, er, you don't tell me so! This can't be old Henry George Yeager, of Blackfoot County?"

"He lived in that county," replied Emerson, "but his name—"

"Please excuse me a moment, Mr. Courtright," said the chief; and withdrew, coming back in a few moments, smiling benevolently.

"Well, Mr. Courtright," said he, "in view of the fact that you are a friend of Mr. Yeager, Patrolman Duggan has consented to taking a shade the worst of it in this deal, and allowing the case to be dismissed. You may have Mr. Yeager, if you want him."

Dazed by this oriental manner of dismissing a man

as if he were a piece of property, but glad to get Morgan freed, Emerson walked with the chief back into the room where Yeager, calm and patient, sat awaiting the next turn of the machinery.

"You may go with Mr. Courtright, Mr. Yeager," said the chief. "We are very sorry this took place."

"Am I to understand," asked Morgan, "that I am tied to Mr. Courtright by your ukase, like a can to a pup?"

"You are to understand what you please," said the chief, stiffening, but confirmed in his impression that "old Henry George Yeager" was a good man to get rid of, "from the dismissal of the charge against you."

"Which is, or was—?" queried Morgan.

"I don't remember," answered the chief. "Go down this way."

"But how about the violated majesty of the law?" persisted Morgan, "and the attack on the church and the city government, and the high treason generally?"

The chief took up a pen and a sheet of paper.

"And the ruffled feathers," Morgan went on, "of Patrolman Fagin or Brennan or Whalen or Hagan, or whatever his sacred name may be?"

"Mr. Courtright," said the chief, pale with anger, "will you kindly remind your friend that this is a private office, and that I have my regular work to do?"

Morgan laughed contemptuously, and walked out with Emerson, leaving the chief full of rage at the interference, on the part of influential people, with the regular work of his office, in cases where the machinery of the force has been set in operation on the theory that no one of any consequence will care.

"Come up to my house, Morgan," said Courtright,

as Morgan halted at the exit from the station. "I have a thousand things—old and new—to talk to you about."

"No," replied Morgan. "My first movement is to go to my lodgings and bathe—I'm not fixed to go to your house, anyhow; and I can't."

"Can I do nothing for you?"

"Yes," answered Morgan. "Lend me a dollar until Saturday night. I want to go to a barber, and feel clean. To-morrow morning I go to work. Evenings, I speak on the street."

"I'll go with you to the mayor," said Emerson. "He's a member of my congregation. I'll ask him to give you a permit to speak."

"No," answered Morgan; "the streets are public places, and any one has a right to talk upon them, if he doesn't interfere with their use as highways. To ask for a permit is to give up that right. I've already conceded too much in allowing them to dismiss my case without a trial."

Evidently, here was a man who was hard to deal with; and yet he was placid and cool, and seemed thoroughly delighted at meeting Emerson. His ideas as to the relative importance of things were strange, that was all. For instance, he did not seem as much humiliated by the sights and sounds and associations of the jail, as a respectable person should; the wrongfulness of his own arrest appeared to be no more important to him than that of the tramp on the bench with him, in whom he seemed to take a great interest.

"What is your work?" asked Emerson.

"When I can't get enough to live on," was the answer, "by selling reform literature, or from the

boys of the Propaganda Association, I carry a hod. It's the easiest kind of a job to get, usually, but I do any sort of common labor. I think I'll go back to the jail, this afternoon. I've thought of something for that tramp. He's a mighty good man, if he had a chance—an electrician—an inventor. And he's got a good thing, if he can only make it go."

Emerson's heart sank. Surely, here was a case of heredity asserting itself. The foundling was gravitating back to the depths from which charity had, for a time only, lifted him.

He could not allow Morgan to fall without making a stronger effort toward his salvation than he had as yet put forth.

"I will not be denied," he urged. "Come to my house, and let us have a part of our talk out: you must!"

"All right; thank you," answered Morgan. There was something in his tone which suggested yielding against judgment, and a denial of blame if things should turn out badly in this visit.

The two walked into the house, the minister overtopping the other by half a head; but not even in his arrowy strength was there a more erect and forth-looking poise than in the bearing of the man he was planning to save.

As they entered a little room full of books and furnished with a library table, a slender woman rose with a bit of needlework in her hands, as if she had been waiting for one—and was a little startled by the entrance of two.

"My dear," said the minister, "I want you to know one of my old Blackfoot County friends—and one

of the dearest ones. This is Morgan Yeager, of whom I have told you: my wife, Morgan."

Amy stepped forward—halted, as some undefined but powerful repulsion, some faint suspicion of a detestable odor, impressed itself upon her sensitive nature. Then she resolutely offered her hand. Morgan bestowed upon it the very slightest of touches, and bowed without a word.

"Sit down, Morgan," urged Emerson cheerily, as he closed the door behind Amy. "And tell me all about yourself. Do you know that I've always thought of you as the greatest lawyer of your town, and finally a United States senator? I was sure of my forecast, after I heard of your having been elected to the Legislature. Something must have happened to you, Morgan!"

"Something did," said Morgan. "I was offered a place in Gurney's office, when I had beaten him in the convention, and if I had taken it, I might by this time have been well toward the top as a railroad lawyer out in that county. And you see what I am!"

"Tell me about it," urged Emerson.

There was in his tone the faintest suggestion of the "it-will-do-you-good" which we use in inviting confidences from the grief-stricken, the perplexed unfortunate, and the ill. Morgan looked sharply at Emerson; but there was nothing of the patronizing in his kindly, friendly glance.

"There was nothing much to it," he answered. "I asked Gurney, when he offered me a chance to study law and work to make me a living while doing it, if I should have to give up any of my convictions if I

became a corporation lawyer. 'Certainly not!' said he. 'Could I go out and make speeches like that I made in the convention?' I asked. He hesitated, and said that on all questions affecting the welfare of the corporation, the legal department was expected to cast the influence of its members on the side of the railroad. 'It's the same with all the great interests,' said Gurney; 'but when there are so many things that don't touch these interests, I don't see how you can feel tied up, or held in. I don't. Come, Morg,' he added, 'I like you, because you, a country kid, have licked me in fair fight. Give up this fool notion of changing conditions. Accept things as they are, and in fifteen years you'll be the biggest man in the State!' That was the way he looked at it."

"Yes," said Emerson, "that was kind of him, wasn't it?"

"Well, of course," went on Morgan, after a pause in which he seemed to be analyzing Emerson's remark in matter and tone, "then I went on and did my failing to accomplish anything in the legislature. There's where Gurney beat me. He handled those reformers as he had handled their predecessors. I didn't care to see any one living in the old neighborhood after the session was over except the Dearwesters. I just went back to see them, and found that they had moved away. Then I began—what you see me doing now."

"The Dearwesters—Olive and her mother—are living in Lattimore," said Emerson. "You know, of course, of Mr. Dearwester's death? Olive sings in my choir. You must see them,"



Morgan sat motionless; but had Emerson been observing his visitor, instead of looking abstractedly out of the window, wondering what he could do for the curiously baffling nature of his old friend, he would have wondered at the flush that mounted to Morgan's forehead at the mention of the fact that he was in the town where Olive lived, of the gleam that flashed into his eyes, of the resolution that set his jaw as he crushed back some powerful impulse. Emerson noted, however, a different tone in his next utterance.

"But you haven't told me," said Emerson, "what your misfortune was. Did something occur to turn Mr. Gurney against you? It seems that he made you a very good offer; and of course you would not allow any mere theories—"

"I was struck by the lightning of truth," said Morgan. "That's all that happened to me. And it has made me an outcast, and a tramp, as you see, with the smell of the jail on me, so that a fine-natured woman shrinks from me as she would from a snake! It—"

Emerson put a friendly hand on Morgan's arm—a slight touch to show that he at least was not repelled.

"My poor boy," said he persuasively, "let me help you out of this pit, up to a new career, and a broader and happier life!"

Morgan shook the hand off, his eyes glowing with some mysterious passion. He spoke out of the thought that had become his familiar spirit.

"A 'happier life'!" he repeated. "Why, do you think that I could, after knowing the joy of living for the poor and disinherited, ever sink to the merely sensual

enjoyments of so-called respectability? A 'broader life'! Show me how I may broaden mine, and I'll thank you; but don't say that it can be done by 'making a career' and marrying, and building up a cofferdam of competence about my own fireside, to keep out the great ocean of human misery, and calling it 'home.' 'Out of these surroundings'! I tell you, Emerson Courtright, that, sleeping to-night in a bunk in a ten-cent lodging-house, with the wreckage of society about me, I shall be on better terms with Morgan Yeager than I'd be in your softest bed—many thanks to you, for all that. I am not yet too old to make 'a career,' but I can't degrade myself to it. I don't lay any claim to being a Christian, but one text I can make my own, *I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God!*"

The minister looked upon the tramp with a sudden feeling of respect, rebuked and abashed by the power and authority and fervor of the speech, and by the passionate devotedness which shone from the face.

"What sort of man are you!" he exclaimed. "You have raised some questions with me, both here and in your speech last night, that I shall not allow to pass unanswered. You have shown me a glimpse into an inferno here in our very midst, of which I had no conception. You seem to know about it. You must not assault my profession, and attack the foundations of my life, and then put me in the wrong when I try to come face to face with you. I go away from this town for a month or two to-morrow. When I get back, I must see you, Morgan, and have it out with you. Make your own terms, but answer me."

"I will, old friend, I will!" answered Morgan, grasping his hand. "I owe you an accounting for one overcoat, and a treasure of the intellect, such as it doesn't often happen that one man is privileged to bestow upon another. I'll talk you to death, when you return—if you'll take some of my books with you when you go!"

## CHAPTER VIII

### BETWEEN ORMUZD AND AHRIMAN

Emerson Courtright, at two o'clock in the morning, sat staring straight before him, really at nothing, but apparently at the pattern of the wall-paper of his lodgings at Angus Falls. On the table lay notes for his next day's discourses, half done; and in his hand was a cheap, paper-covered book, a copy of one of the numerous popular editions of George's *Progress and Poverty*. His eyes were wide with sleeplessness, and under them were the dark stigmata of care.

The sound of a person turning in bed came through the open door from an adjoining room, but he gave no sign of having heard it. Neither did he notice the soft footfalls of one approaching the door, nor the appearance of his wife in the doorway, rosy from sleep, her flowing robe gathered by dainty ribbons about the snowy throat and virginal form. A painter might use the scene for an allegorical canvas: The book, the Call to the Apostolate of Humanity; The woman, the Noose cast by Self in the Guise of Love; the pale Student, the Devotee Choosing. Lest the moral should be lost or reversed, the picture should, of course, carefully conceal the fact that she in the doorway was the bride of a month or so, and that he, gazing at vacancy, was most blameworthy thus to desert the One specially committed to him—because of his yearning toward All.

She returned to her bed: he resumed his reading. A clock struck the half-hour; Amy again came to the door, looked pensively upon her husband, and vanished. Emerson, for a while, went on with his reading, and then resumed his first position of fixed regard, his clenched hands resting on the volume, his lips moving as if in prayer: and, with a thrill of reverence at this evidence of his consecration, prayer, as his wife thought it, she returned to look at him for the third time. "*They who fight with Ormuzd,*" was what he whispered, however; "*and they who fight with Ahriman!* Somewhere, sometime, will the muster-roll be called! On which side shall I be found? *Shall be found!* Why put it in the future? On which side am I now?"

"'Into the Valley of the Shadow of Death' " he read, "'yet often leads the path of duty; through the streets of Vanity Fair walk Christian and Faithful, and on Greatheart's armor still ring the clanging blows. Ormuzd still fights with Ahriman—the Prince of Light with the Powers of Darkness. *He who will hear, to him the clarions of the battle call.* How they call, and call, and call, till the heart swells that hears them! Strong soul and high endeavor, the world needs them now. Beauty still lies imprisoned, and iron wheels go over the good and true and beautiful that might spring from human lives. *And they who fight with Ormuzd, though they may not know each other—somewhere, sometime, will the muster-roll be called!*"

As he read the poignant climax of the wonderful book, he seemed to hear the shrilling clarions, their call by him denied. In the anguish of spiritual travail,

he threw himself forward, like one of his own converts at the altar, his face pillowed upon his arms. The clock struck three. Amy ran quickly forward and threw her arm about his shoulder.

"Dearie, dearie," she murmured, as his hand slid round her waist, "won't you please lie down? It's after three, and you haven't slept once. Oh, I can't have you killing yourself, even for such a great work as this! Surely, it can't be required of me to give up my husband—and it will kill you if you keep on so!"

"Darling," said Emerson, seating the slim white figure on his knee, "it isn't what you call 'the work' that's doing this."

"I know," said she, "that these dreadful books about poverty and the things we ought to do and can't are making it worse. You do the—the Lord's work until you are nearly prostrated, and then you spend your nights on such useless studies as these!"

"Useless!" he ejaculated excitedly. "Amy, the thing that is burning me up in my brain, that makes my eyes like flame and my heart like ice, is the question sounding in my ears all the time: Is it the Lord's work that I'm doing; is it? Last night, as the people came crowding forward after Olive's song, under conviction of sin, this thing kept dinning in my ears: Had they any notion of their real sins? Had I done anything except appeal to their sensibilities? I tell you, Amy, my darling, I'm under conviction myself, and unless I can find rest, I shall—I shall . . . . . Help me . . . to bed . . . Amy . . . I'm . . . afraid I shall—"

With this appeal for help, there appeared a deathly

whiteness about the lips, a shivering which shook his hands like a spasm of fright, a loosening of the thews of the powerful limbs. Amy's face grew still whiter, and she sprang as if to summon aid.

"No, don't call," he murmured, "don't! It isn't necessary. I've been this . . . way . . . before . . . There, dearest, . . . thanks . . . . . Good girl! . . . . . All right in the morning!"

Presently he rallied from his collapse, and assured his wife that it was only vertigo from overwork and indigestion, and that he had had one or two attacks of the same sort before, and knew it would pass off. Reassured by these familiar words, Amy got the great athlete into his bed, where, after some spasmodic jerkings and twitchings, he seemed so normal and slept so soundly, that she grew less acutely anxious. There were causes in plenty for his indisposition, she reasoned. For a month he had been pouring himself out as an oblation on the altar of the church. Olive had sung in her divinest way the simple pleading songs of revivalism, and their joint efforts had borne fruit in another host of converts. Emerson had seemed transformed from the polished and fervent orator of his regular decorous services into something mystical and prophet-like. He himself did not know what the power was; but he felt that some compelling cord ran from him to the minds of his hearers, by which he drew their wills as he chose. The results were such as, a few months before, he would have questioned as "sensational." It seemed as if some tremendous supernormal power breathed forth in sermons and songs; and the people of the little city, night after night, surged to the doors of their auditori-

um—a great rink—stood in aisles as if under a spell, and rose for prayers in a mass, in a newly awakened hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Amy felt that such efforts could not last indefinitely, and was not so much surprised as distressed at Emerson's collapse. Softly she put back the curls from his pale brow as he slept, softly she kissed his hair, softly she moved about the room in slippered feet.

She was glad that the meetings were to close the next night, and she resolved that her influence should be exerted against his doing any more of this sort of work. It was aside from his ordinary course of labor, and was not her style of religious work, anyhow, with its mob-like troopings forward, its undignified strivings for forgiveness, altogether lacking in culture and repose. These things she felt, rather than thought, knowing that the revival was the traditional foundation of her church; and she hailed Emerson's incoherent questionings of his work as an evidence of his agreement with her own secret sympathies. If he would only settle down to the regular ministry, she thought, and the building up of his reputation as a pastor—

There was a tap at the door, announcing a messenger with a telegram for her. It was on an "R. R. B." telegraph blank, and much like a letter, as her brother's messages usually were.

"Dear Amy: Don't be frightened, but mama has a rather severe attack of heart trouble, and we think you had better come home on No. 1. I intended to meet the special pulling my car, and come down with you and party after services to-night, but can't now. Special will be there all the same with Kittrick and party aboard from Laidlaw. Not necessary



for Emerson to change arrangements. Don't be frightened, as Dr. Aylesbury thinks all will be well, but come on No. 1.  
"JACK."

Emerson opened his eyes wearily, and started to activity at once on seeing Amy standing by his bedside, looking from this message to him, her face eloquent of dismay.

"What's the matter, dearest!" he exclaimed. "Bad news?"

"Oh, Emerson!" she wailed. "Mama is ill—perhaps dying—and has sent for me. And I can't leave you, dearie, I can't!"

He read the telegram slowly, passing his hand once or twice over his eyes as if to clear his vision. When he spoke, it was with his wonted resolution.

"Let us hope," said he, "that results may justify Jack's hopes, and not his fears. But your course is clear, darling. I am in need of you always, but my need can wait. My vertigo is gone, and I am quite recovered from my little illness of last night. Go to your mother. I shall do my day's work, and come home to-night to rest—with you."

She could not doubt that this big fellow with the convincing intonation was right; and as for strength, even his pallor could not deprive him of its very image and superscription. So she thought and so she felt as she was borne homeward on "Number One," her hands still warm from his parting pressure. Her mind, drawn to the possibility of a great bereavement, returned only occasionally to her husband's illness, which the terms "vertigo," "indigestion," and "over-work" seemed to make less terrifying in bringing it within the scope of familiarity.

His thoughts, on the other hand, went sweeping on, like the impulse of the blood-horse to the race, toward the speaking of the day; and the evening of that memorable night saw him again with the hectic in his cheeks and the febrile shine in his eyes. His few and simple words in opening the services vibrated and reverberated and thrilled through the vast audience as if by virtue of some active principle entirely independent of their meaning.

The pastor of the church read the lesson and spoke of the presence among them of the Holy Spirit, as of something as real as the room itself. Another offered a prayer, full of the mystic zealotry of the time: and then Olive sang Faure's *Crucifix*.

The organist paused long before beginning, so that the first sobbing notes of the noble prelude breathed forth upon dead stillness. Then the soft, full tones of the great soprano came as if some diviner instrument had been gently blown into the harmony already full. It seemed that the people held their breath, as the song moved on from majesty to majesty, swelling, soaring, culminating in the poignant "O ye that mourn!" and rounding into the finale which left them with fluttering hearts and tearful eyes.

Then Courtright rose. He leaned for a few moments against the pulpit, and once or twice made as if to speak, before his voice was heard. He took no text, as was his custom, and made no formal exordium, but in a manner quite unlike his usual one, began rhapsodizing upon the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. He spoke of the light that shone out of Heaven round about Saul on the Damascus way, and of all true conversion as derived from some new light;

of Saul's three-days' blindness as symbolic of the despair which comes from man's bereavement of his old self; of the agony of him who goes about—happy if it be but for Saul's three days—sightless, wrestling with his lower man, groveling in the dust of evil, straining at the ties which bind him to his synagogue and his class, wretched in his pride of place and prejudice, stung by the thought of what men would say, every evil insect and reptile in his being burrowing into his vitals for shelter from the searching, searing, purifying Light, the light of Truth, which redeems or kills.

So far he was as lucid, as logical as speaker could be, and spoke like a man telling some story of his own soul. Then he paused, hesitated, and with that gesture of clearing his eyes, he stood for perhaps a minute, mute and almost motionless. At last the pause became insupportable in its tension. In the rear of the room was heard the sound of sobbing—the deep, strange sobbing of a man, and from another quarter came a repressed scream, a woman's cry of "Oh, *oh*, OH!" At these, the preacher, as if rousing himself, stretched forth his hand in seeming abandonment of his theme, and exclaimed:

"Behold He cometh with the clouds! And every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him! His eyes shall be as flames of fire, and His voice as the voice of many waters; in His right hand seven stars, and proceeding out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance as the sun shining in its strength. From His throne beyond the crystal sea, His throne out of which proceed lightnings and voices and thunders, He comes with His mighty fan to purge

the threshing-floor of this world's iniquity. Let the chaff beware of the fire of His furnace—and where is he that can say 'I am of the Wheat!' "

"Come, Lord, I'm ready!" screamed a woman's voice, bursting forth out of the smother of murmurings and inarticulate utterances which followed this apocalyptic outburst. A shrill tenor responded "Amen!" while all over the great auditorium ran a composite hum sharpening to a sort of wail, like a wind bearing some burden of unuttered woe.

Olive leaned forth from the raised platform on which sat the choir, and first gazed on the congregation. Here she found every evidence of religious ecstasy: some faces were radiant with the strange smile of frenzy; some convulsed and red with weeping; some laughing with the tears bathing their features. Some bowed their faces on their hands or arms; some groveled on their knees; while here and there were seen the wondering or disdainful or amused or cynical or merely impassive faces of those still untouched by the tempest which swept the audience.

Then she turned to the man who had evoked the storm. Something strange in his manner, something incoherent in his torrent of mystical speech, arrested her attention and filled her with vague alarm. And she marveled, that, as his utterances grew more and more disconnected and meaningless, their effect upon the congregation waxed greater. His sentences came now as if forced from him by wrenching spasms, figures huge and cloud-like and vague, tremendous imagery, the "Kubla Khan" of oratory. As his pauses again grew longer, the frenzied people filled them with their shouts of "Glory to God!" and the like,

until the service became a weird antiphonal chant, in which the speaker hurled forth his strange cries, to be answered by the mass of humanity in front of him.

At last he began to lean upon the pulpit for support, and his sentences began returning upon the track of his discourse, in repetitions and paraphrases. Olive was now in a fever of anxiety; for she knew that Mr. Courtright was in some distress, and she felt relief when, at the end of a pause so long that all present in the possession of their senses must have noticed it, she saw him lift his hands and, in abandonment of all prearrangement as to the services, heard him say, "Let us pray!"

Then followed the strangest scene of all. As his voice rang out again in a prayer filled with supplications for light and for mercy, the more demonstrative joined with their amens and shouts of emotion. Gradually these responses, each independent of any other, grew closer together, until, here and there all over the hall, there came to be culminating peaks of sound, where some fervid soul was pouring itself forth in uninterrupted prayer and shouting, heedless of the discourse of the preacher. By degrees these grew to such a volume that those who remained and continued to scoff, carried on conversations with one another in ordinary tones, with no more chance of being overheard than if they had been talking in a howling gale. So it was, that no one but Olive noticed when Emerson Courtright's voice ceased to mingle with the others; or that his lips continued to move after his voice failed, as if he were trying vainly to go on; or that his head finally dropped forward on his breast.

## CHAPTER IX

### TWO FATEFUL DAYS

Mrs. Dearwester was a great favorite with the gentlemen. They liked her piquancy of speech, so free from any endeavor to adjust herself to the change from a frontier farm to a somewhat wide association with people of prominence in a city of fifty thousand. Mr. Bloodgood and Mr. Courtright were sworn friends of hers, in spite of her severity to the former, as was young Mr. Dewey of the bank. Mr. Elkins said he regarded a talk with her as an oasis in a desert of twaddle. Captain Tolliver was afraid of her: his southern ceremoniousness to women being ill adapted to conversation with one whose discourse was principally satire and irony.

It is to be noted, however, that her callers were vastly fewer when Olive was from home—a fact which Mrs. Dearwester accounted for by the obvious advantage of salting the old sheep to get the lamb.

The mere presence of a man at the door, therefore, was no surprise, when one day the bell rang, and she peeped out from a convenient window to scan the porch before answering the summons. This man, however, did not look like any of her friends in Lattimore. He reminded her more of the people she had known out on the prairie. His soft hat was yellowed by the sun, and his skin harmonized with it in tone.

"I wonder who it can be!" she thought.

He stood squarely before her as she opened the door, and for a time they looked into each other's eyes without a word.

"I thought you wouldn't know me," said he. "But I recognized you half a block away on the street this morning."

"For the love of Heaven!" said Mrs. Dearwester shortly, and as if making a casual remark. "If it isn't Morgan Yeager! Come in, come in, *come in!* Of all people! I supposed you'd be planted out there in the buffalo-grass for life. Oh, how glad I am to see you!"

His appearance of shabbiness did not strike her as odd, for he looked much as she had been used to seeing him. He seemed like a return into her life of something good and wholesome which she had lost, and she beamed upon him in the old maternal way—his motherless state appealing to her just as it had done in Morgan's boyhood. They talked the incessant way of old friends new-met. She had so much to tell of their life in Madison, of Olive and her precious qualities, that beyond learning from Morgan that he was doing "all right" and was "traveling," and had left Blackfoot County, he had told her very little of himself when at last he went away in spite of her warm invitation to stay longer.

"Come and see me," said she at parting. "I've got a bad habit of keeping on liking my old friends, no matter how big fools they make of themselves. So you're always welcome."

"I'm not exactly respectable," said he.

"Well," she replied, "you look respectable. And

if you keep your hand on your pocketbook you won't be in any danger from such respectable folks as you may meet at our house. You can stand respectability once in a while, can't you, if we can all the time?"

Morgan always contended that when a man becomes a missionary or proselytizer he deliberately chooses to be to most people a perennial nuisance. He must miss no chance to preach his reform; and most persons dislike preaching of the personally directed sort. Morgan carried his rule so far as to repay Mrs. Dearwester's hospitality by talking Georgeism to her, after he had, much to her disgust, explained his mission in Lattimore.

"Everything in the world," he would say, enunciating a principle for which his philosopher can not be held responsible, "in the last analysis comes down to mathematical relations. We never understood astronomy until Newton and Kepler put it into figures. Same with chemistry: we blundered along and cut and tried with alchemy and the like, until along came the man who reduced it to figures and quantities and proportions, and we began to know. Music is simply quantity-relations in sound waves. Colors are mathematical values in etheric vibrations. Life itself would be comprehensible if we could once hit upon the mathematical basis which it surely has."

"Well," said Mrs. Dearwester, "I'll try and give it a few minutes' time some day, and figure it out for you. I'd like to know the arithmetic of why one man spends his time weeping for his fellow-man and trying to point out how miserable he is, and another lies awake nights scheming to cheat him out of his eye-teeth. It would be interesting."



"Henry George," Morgan went on, smiling, but not to be drawn from the track of his thought, "studied the causes of poverty, and did for the subject what Newton did for astronomy—made it an exact science."

"He can have my share of it to experiment with," said she, "any time he wants it."

"Any one," went on Morgan, "who understands the George philosophy, no matter how uneducated he may be, knows more about sociology than any one else, no matter how learned, who doesn't; and can calculate pretty accurately how the wealth produced in any community is distributed; so much to wages, so much to interest, so much to rent—everything going into these three shares. Now this Lattimore boom—everybody lauds the Elkinses and Barslows, the boomers, who, they say, are 'making the town.' But the man who knows this philosophy can tell that it means ruin for all concerned, except the parasites, and for most of them. Every time you lift the price of land, it's at the expense of capital and labor. So much more for land-owners, so much less for producers; up with the landlord, down with the laborer and accumulator, and vice versa."

"I don't notice any laborers breakin' their necks to do anything for me," answered the skeptic. "All I get seems to come from the monopolists. There's always been the pickerels and the minnows, and I guess there always will be. You can figure and figure, but you'll always see the little fellows tickled to death if only the big jaws snap together just back of their tail fins. Most folks that amount to much manage to get along, I notice."

"But how?" inquired Morgan. "How do they get

along? I found in jail here a tramp who has a most important invention, that has beggared him—he's a fine electrician. He thinks his motor will revolutionize the production of power. Suppose it does: the benefits of the invention will simply go to men who own the lands on which it is to be used, and the landless—"

"I notice these inventions don't seem to help me much," said she, "any more than your making a tramp of yourself does. Do you really think it makes you any more influential as a preacher of what you think is right?"

Morgan sat long in silence, as if at a loss for an answer, and rose to go without replying.

"When do you expect Olive back?" said he.

"To-morrow, in the night sometime," answered Mrs. Dearwester. "Come in when she's here, Morgan. She's like me about old friends."

"Seeing some old friends," he replied, "won't do her much good. I must try to come, though. Good night."

His manner of saying this impressed Mrs. Dearwester's sensitive woman's nature as not being quite sincere. "'I must *try* to come!'" she repeated to herself. "What a funny thing for Morgan Yeager to say!" Morgan himself was conscious of having left an unpleasant impression. Yet, he dared not trust himself with Olive to any extent, even though he were quite "respectable" in appearance. He might have given up this teacher's life, if he had found her at the old farm that night when he went back after his failure, as he called it; and if she could have been brought to— Well, he simply was out of all possible

consideration by any woman, now; and, as far as that went, all women were out of his life except as human beings, merely. The Spartan nature of the man rose, and he shut out Olive, he thought, as absolutely as he had shut out preferment from his life. He felt that his was no nature for platonic, and he would not seek her friendship, even. And after he had actually met her, he sat down in his room and laughed sardonically at himself for presuming to consider any relations with her, even so far as to give them up.

"You needn't have bothered yourself, you fool!" said he.

The special train on which Mrs. Dearwester relied to bring Olive at the time she mentioned, lost the Kittrick party at Hammersley, and arrived at Angus Falls with the private car vacant, save for an evil-looking porter, a pale mulatto with freckles dotting his yellow face. The despatcher sent the agent to hurry the Courtright party if possible, as a storm was coming, and Number Two, already late, must be passed at Hazelgrove. Mr. Courtright, rallying under a strychnia hypodermic, was asking to be sent home; and the physician saw no danger in the three hours' ride, with home and his own medical attendant at the end of it. Mrs. Courtright having gone, it was Olive and Mr. Courtright alone who were hustled into the car, and not until she sought Mrs. Kittrick, with whom she was acquainted, for suggestions as to the administration of Emerson's powders, did she know that she was alone with the sick man and the porter. By this time they were speeding across the open country, in a torrential downpour of rain.

Emerson's collar was open, and his coat off. He lay in a state-room berth, in such a stupor that she had much to do to awaken him to receive the powder.

"It seems to me—" said he. "I'm trying to think this out—"

"But you're not to think or talk," said Olive. "You must lie still until we reach Lattimore."

"Oh, is that you, Olive?" said he. "Good girl! I never could have done it. If it hadn't been for—that song. Where is Amy? Oh, I remember."

In a few minutes he slept heavily. She smoothed his pillow and stroked his brow to cool its fever, thinking of the blue-eyed young giant who had been so good to the little prairie girl, and had done so much for her.

"Here's a note for you, ma'am," said the porter, who seemed to have been standing at the door. "From Mrs. Kittrick, for Mrs. Courtright."

Olive's face flushed, as she handed it back—whether at being seen bestowing those attentions upon Mr. Courtright, or at the porter's mistake, she could hardly have told. What the negro might think was scarcely of interest to her, and she had no moral horizon enabling her to know that, to the porter, the usual explanation of a man's inability to board a car without assistance, is inebriety; and that the only astonishing thing in the episode was the perfect sobriety of the lady in the case. So when he retired respectfully, Olive could not understand why he studied her with his beady, red-black eyes, wherever she went in the car.

But she felt a sense of wrongness in the atmosphere. The most far-seeing of us are blind to the

mysteriously pregnant quantities in the problem of fate, to which the exponent of to-morrow may raise the trivial circumstance of to-day. Olive could not know that this was a fateful night for her; for while the danger-signal was displayed to her subconsciousness in that sense of the sinister, it was in such cryptic form as to fail of its warning. She never thought of her lonely ride as fraught with any peril except that of being alone with Emerson in case he should have another seizure; but she trembled at this possibility.

And then, the storm was terrifying, with its rushing wind, its downpour of rain, its incessant lightning, and its thunders, drowning the noises of the train. The beady eyes of the porter made her nervous. They seemed to her—but she dismissed the thought as the product of unreasoning race-prejudice—like those of some beast lying in wait for a gazelle, at a drinking-place in the jungly murk of an equatorial forest.

She sat in one of the chairs and tried to think of things elsewhere: of John Bloodgood, in whose private car she was traveling, aware that its being at the service of the Courtright party was preponderantly on her account; of his evident preference for her; of his failure, nevertheless, to pay her any of those public attentions which might compromise him with another; of Mrs. Hess-Alleyne and the London and Chicago stories; of Mrs. Dearwester's evident disapproval of Mr. Bloodgood; and of the prospect that, as usual, Mrs. Dearwester's mysterious prejudgment was to be justified by the outcome.

"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," and Olive was still engaged with these, when she

became conscious that the train had halted. The porter went out and investigated, came in dripping, and reported that something was wrong with the track, and that all hands had gone ahead on the engine. Olive took a peep at Emerson, found him sleeping soundly, in spite of the thunder, which now bellowed louder than ever, and returned to her seat, the feeling of sinister apprehensiveness more daunting than before. What if he should grow worse? Why had she allowed herself to be so unceremoniously hurried into such a position? Why had she not found out that the car was vacant of passengers, before starting? What if he should die!

The old yearning tenderness for the red-cheeked boy came back now, as she found herself charged with a duty toward him, in a selfless and reverential affection more free from any taint of wish or expectation of possession, more fit for celestial scrutiny, than the pale flame which launched the funeral barge of the Lily of Astolat on its voyage down the broad flood to that Camelot where Lancelot dwelt.

His spirit was wearing itself out, she thought, beating itself to death against some prison; for she had seen in him lately a tense and voiceless struggle waxing day by day—had felt it in his very presence, had heard it between the words of his discourses. With all the ways of life smoothed and beautified for him to grosser eyes, yet to him, she felt assured, there stretched out great and strange spiritual wildernesses, rough with unutterable asperities. She wondered if any one else knew it as she did. And then again, she came back to the question: What if, in spite of his great frame, the blade of the spirit had

cut the scabbard through, as it seemed in his worst prostration it had, and to-night, away from wife and friends, with her alone, his time had come! There was something tragically sweet in the thought—something which she drove from her mind by looking in upon him again, and turning away, half smiling at her own panic. His breathing was full and strong, now; he looked a sleeping gladiator.

Presently the porter informed her that her state-room was prepared; and that it looked as if they were out for the night. She walked into the little apartment, but could not bring herself to the point of lying down. She wondered why, as she went back to her chair; and then the truth came to her overpoweringly, that, why she knew not, wherefore she could not have said, but of something she was afraid. The track—there was something amiss with it; but it was not of that. The storm raged outside with terrible fury; but it was not of that. Her apprehensions as to Mr. Courtright were over now; it was not because of them. Yet terror—unreasoning but strong—knocked at the door of her heart, and she was sick of fear.

She was wearied by her month's work, and "in the dead vast and middle of the night," sitting as she was, she grew drowsy. The rush of the waters in the ditches beside the track gradually progressed into the drone and hum of the revival, and again she could hear the shouts and cries of the frenzied ones. Then came the unconsciousness of sleep, until—until she felt something offensive pass over her face. She looked up, and stiffened with horror. Stooping over her, his eyes fixed upon her face, with more than

ever of that expression so suggestive of the jungle and its unspeakable horrors, stood the negro.

With some muttered word of excuse or apology he went away; but she could still feel the breath of his approach or touch, still detect the taint of his presence in the air, and from the end of the car to which he had retired, she still, in fact or in fancy, could see his eyes glaring upon her with that savagely expressive glow in them.

It seemed as if she would go mad. She wondered if he had really touched her; and her lips—she grew to feel a shivering horror in the belief that he *had* touched them as she slept. She went to the lavatory and washed her mouth, as one washes one's hands from contact with a snake or toad. Her panic now came back. She could stay in the car no longer! Softly she tried the rear door, but it was locked: and in front was the place of the beastly eyes. She felt trapped, and—word of immemorial woe to woman—defenseless. Was she defenseless? Could Emerson be awakened? Surely, in this extremity, even the sleep of the opiate would fall from him at such a call as hers. Even in his stupor, near to him seemed her only haven of safety, the last citadel to which her fears had hunted her.

So she sat by him, listening to his breathing, now becoming more and more natural, listening to sounds of the storm outside, listening to the stealthy footsteps of the negro as he moved up and down the aisle. Once she spoke to Emerson, in her terror, as the man stopped outside the state-room; and he answered confusedly and without really awakening. This gave her some assurance; for the porter went away



as if at the sound of Mr. Courtright's voice. Several times after that the sleeper spoke incoherently, and Olive answered in conversational tones, driven by some blind impulse, like the protective deceits of wild birds, to lead her foe (real or imaginary) to believe that Emerson was awake and talking with her.

As the gray dawn broadened into day at the windows, he opened his eyes, and she saw with a great joy that he was quite himself!

"Good morning," said he, smiling. "What has kept us out all night?"

"Trouble with the track," said she. "The engine has been gone ever so long, and we are left alone out here on the prairie—and I've been afraid!"

"Poor girl!" said he; and then, as he saw better the distress in her expression, "Why, you're almost ill! You must have—"

But before he could say more she had fled to her own state-room, where she lay smothering her foolish sobbing in pillows; and whence she did not emerge until Emerson called to her that breakfast was ready, insisting that she must take a cup of coffee at least.

She was too entirely healthy, in both body and mind, not to be able to rally from her agitation, especially in the sunshine of morning, with this strong friend near her, now apparently recovered from his illness. The trainmen ate their meals in the special car, at her invitation. They were stalled the conductor said in a sea of corn-fields between two washed-out bridges, one a mile ahead, the other five miles behind.

"They're putting in some kind of a hickey to carry us over," said he; "but I guess we're in for a day on the farm."

The fresh breeze blew from the west, and a sky, swept clear of every shred of vapor, arched in blue resplendency over the shimmering deep-green waves of the rustling corn. The square inserts of rye and barley and oats quivered in tones of gold and green, swept from shore to shore by waves of shadow. Olive had gathered, by the side of the track, an armful of the prairie sweet-williams, and a few early wild roses; and after giving to the conductor, a big yellow-bearded Irishman, a nosegay for his coat, she had used them for the decoration of the parlor, and their fragrance filled the car. She, herself, the sweetest blossom of all, sat in the charming lassitude of weariness, waiting patiently for their deliverance. The whole scene, full, as it was, of the exquisite beauty of June, filled Emerson with poetic pangs—the grief of the artistic soul at meeting with that which is beyond expression. They talked—of the old days in the farther west; of the moist and fulsome richness of this land and the brown aridity of that; of the hot winds, the tornado, the dust storms, the blizzards; of the old pupils in the old school; and finally of Morgan Yeager, and his appearance in Lattimore.

“Mama writes me that she has seen him several times,” said Olive. “It troubles me to know that he has become what he is. He never wanted to do anything but what was right. Some one else must be to blame, when such a boy turns out so.”

“And that brings me,” said Emerson after a long pause, during which he seemed oblivious of her remark, “to my collapse last night, and the cause of it.”

Olive wondered how Morgan’s case could bring him to this, of all subjects,

"I'm ashamed to break down so," he continued, "and then be as well as ever the next day. But in spite of my hulking strength I'm apt to be a good deal torn up by my—by my mental strains and moral crises. Last night I slept almost for the first time in a fortnight—Doctor Ellis has been warning me against the very thing that happened, and croaking of 'autotoxæmia,' if any one knows what that is—and I've been in the greatest trouble of my life."

"I hope," said Olive, fluttered at finding herself called upon to express her feelings as to his personal welfare—it was so momentous, "I hope it is over."

"Nearly over, I think," said he. "I was becoming convinced from day to day, that what I have been preaching—what all the churches are preaching—is not Christianity at all, but a conventional system of churchianity which is positively non-Christian."

"Why, Emerson Courtright!" exclaimed Olive in horror. "How could you ever have thought such a thing! And how glad I am that it is over!"

"Nearly over," he corrected; "and the worst is ended with these meetings. I've been bringing people to take vows which they do not understand, and which society will not let them keep if they do. The mockery of it nearly killed me; yet I was in the grip of the work, and couldn't stop. Even when I tried to get strength to stop and cry out that real Christianity is a greater thing than this milkless system of half-beliefs, I was swept away, just as they were. It would have ended me in another week, Olive."

"But you don't want me to think that you mean that those converts were not bettered—saved?"

"Bettered?" he replied interrogatively. "Yes, some

of them, I think; but saved—what do you mean by that?”

“From sin,” she replied, after a pause in which she realized that the answer gave her some difficulty.

“Not one of them,” he answered, “is saved from that. They will join the church, and maybe get rid of some of their grosser personal sins and vices. But they will not become Christians. They were not converted under Christian auspices and ministrations. They were converted by a Pharisee to pharisaism. They will observe forms; but in business, which is their life, they will act as before. The men with whom they trade, for whom they work, whom they employ, will not notice a shade of difference in their lives, as far as the essentials of unselfishness and love are concerned. Unless they are persons who have been in the habit of swearing or drinking in public, no one will notice the difference. They will partake of the sacrament of wine and bread in church, and every day they will gorge themselves with the bodies and blood of their fellow-men—the grist ground out of the horrible mill of our human society. A Christian can not live so. He must, at least, protest against the operation of the mill, even as he is forced to go through its terrible burs. They will not protest. They will follow blind guides. The very light which is in them is darkness!”

“You must not talk like this!” she exclaimed, wondering if his reason had not been unsettled by his overwork and illness, horrified to hear a minister calmly saying such sacrilegious things about his own work, and fearful of a relapse. “You must not talk at all!”

"Perhaps I had better wait," said he after a long questioning look at her, "until I have my own ideas better formulated. But remember, I am at the turning-point of my life—no, I won't start off again—I believe I'll go up the track and see how things look."

She seized his hand convulsively.

"No, no!" she cried. "Don't leave me here: stay in the car, or take me with you!"

"Why, child," he replied, as if getting some new impression from her manner, "you have been almost frightened to death about something. What—well, I'll stay. Get something out of the library, won't you, and read to me? I began Shelley's *Masque of Anarchy*. Please read that."

Night came on, and still the gap in the track was unfilled—taking less time than the chasm which years had opened between the lives of the two old friends in the car. Olive noted in Emerson's glance at the porter a sharp inquiry and a sternness which showed that no explanation of her fright was necessary, and betrayed a manlike side to his character very unlike the transcendental pulpit orator she had learned to know.

"I shall be awake," said he, "until we get to Lattimore. Please lie down and get the rest you need."

The trainmen had gone off again with the engine, and the stillness invited repose. Olive slept luxuriously: yet not so heavily that she did not feel, rather than hear, the soft approach of the negro, closer, closer, down the aisle, until he stopped at her door and waited. She thought she heard the soft rustle of the portière slowly pulled aside, a motion in the

air as if from a gently opened door. She dared not call; she dared not remain silent. Suddenly she heard a swift pouncing sound, as if an eagle had swooped upon his prey, the snarling oath of the negro was cut off by a hand of iron on his throat, and was followed by the inarticulate gurglings of a man choking.

"Ah didn't mean any hahm, boss—" he whimpered.

"Not a word!" whispered the Reverend Emerson Courtright, as the gurgling recommenced. "I've been watching you, you hell-hound! If you come inside this car from now on, I'll wring your neck, and throw you in the ditch! Ah! you would, would you? Give me that!"

A sound followed like the ringing of a knife in falling, and then a crushing blow.

"There!"

Thank God, it was Emerson's voice, the voice of a man who talked to the thing he smote.

"Come along!"

And the sound of hustling, dragging and whimpering receded to the smoking-room; a door shut; a key turned in the lock: and Emerson Courtright came back panting, listened a moment at her door, and went into his room, leaving the mishandled porter locked up with a sense of injury rankling in his bosom, that, just because he chose to do a little detective work in the interest of a larger tip at the journey's end, he should be treated worse than a midnight house-breaker.

As for Olive, she was filled with a mixture of terror at what had occurred, and admiration for the victor in the fray.

## CHAPTER X

### THE ENLISTMENT OF A RECRUIT

Morgan Yeager was engaged in decorating (or defacing) available spaces on dead walls and other conspicuous erections with "Blackhall Stamps," a queer appliance for propaganda work devised by an ardent soul named Blackhall, who applied the methods of the exploiters of root pills and live-stock fairs to force land reform upon the notice of the wayfaring man. The "Blackhall Stamp" had an adhesive back, and a face on which some Georgeite text was printed. Some simply mentioned the fact that "The Single Tax Will do It," or asked the seemingly unsociological question, "Have You Seen the Cat?" Others bore bits of argument like: "Tax dogs to make dogs scarce. Why tax houses or factories or stocks of goods or money? To make *them* scarce? It *does*." The Emersonism, "While another hath no land, my title to mine, your title to yours, is vitiated;" the Jeffersonism, "The earth belongs in usufruct to the living: the dead have no right or power over it," were much used; as were also Red Jacket's exclamation: "Sell land! Why not then sell the sky, the waters and the air? The land is for all men!" and the Mosaic text: "The land shall not be sold for ever, saith the Lord; for the land is mine."

Good places to put these were to be found on cars and water-tanks, and about waiting-rooms.

"Some switchman may see that," thought he, as he stuck one on a refrigerator-car, "and ask, at the meeting of his union, how the single tax will do it." On the gate-post of a workman's cottage he affixed the legend: "This house is taxed. When houses escape and vacant lots are taxed, houses will be plenty. Where vacant lots escape and houses are taxed, vacant lots are plenty. Which is best for him who labors or him who rents? The single tax will do it."

This nefarious occupation of systematized trespass having brought Morgan to the railway station, he glanced at the group on the platform, and saw his friend and fellow-jailbird, Silverthorn, tramp, lineman, electrician and inventor. He was conversing with a medium-sized, well-dressed, middle-aged man in a slouch hat, whose iron-gray mustache and imperial looked half military, and whose keen glance swept the platform observantly between whiles as he scanned some sketches which Morgan's friend was making in an old note-book. Farther down the platform were Mrs. Courtright and Mrs. Dearwester, talking together, and awaiting the coming of the much delayed train with Emerson and Olive on board. As the whistle sounded down the yards, the keen-eyed man gave the other a card.

"Come 'most any time, and I'll look it over," said he.

"Who's your friend, Silverthorn?" asked Morgan.

"That man," answered Silverthorn, whispering as if imparting something, on the secrecy of which his very life depended, "represents unlimited wealth. He's about taking an interest in my Polyvolt Motor. I was just showing a minor application of it which will



make railway accidents impossible. Did I tell you about that? Well, I put a Polyvolt in each engine at an expense of not to exceed twenty-five dollars. I cut in a single number forty copper wire along the track, and with apparatus at stations that won't cost anything, hardly, I light a lamp in the cab when one engine gets within any given distance of another on the same track, ring a bell to call the engineer's attention to it, and if he don't stop at that, the device throws on the air automatically, and stops both engines as if they were welded to the rails. And when he is stopped, each engineer finds himself connected by telephone with every engine in the block, including the one that stopped him, and with two stations each way—all with the Polyvolt Motor and a wire the size of sewing-silk!"

"But who is he?" persisted Morgan, to whom the wonders of the Polyvolt Motor were a familiar story.

"V. W. Feek," replied Silverthorn, referring to the card. "Claim agent of the Halliday Railway System at Lattimore."

"Good name for a claim agent!" sneered Morgan. "Rhymes with squeak and seek and peek and sneak. A man who does the dirtiest of dirty work, from beating a farmer out of the value of a pig run over by the engine to befooling a section hand's widow out of the price of her husband's blood. That's your claim agent, your Feek. But where does the unlimited wealth come in?"

"Oh, you're bitter, Yeager," protested Silverthorn. "We've got to be protected against the personal-injury shysters and ambulance-chasers; and you know as well

as anybody that a ten-dollar cow is a thoroughbred as soon as she's hit by the pilot!"

Morgan laughed. Silverthorn was in the last stage of shabbiness, his toes bursting from his shoes, his back firmly to the wall to keep his only presentable side outward. But his eye rolled excitedly, and his attitude toward railways had become that of a prospective owner—all from hopes based on the one-minute's talk with Mr. Feek.

"Well," said Morgan, "we won't argue the matter. But I'm for the ambulance-chasing shyster as against the great railway lawyer under whom your Feeks act, when they bribe jurors in personal-injury cases, or city councils to get terminals—they all do it, or they don't hold their jobs."

"Hush!" exclaimed Silverthorn. "He might hear you, and then I'd be queered, maybe: and you know you're in on this motor deal. What I've said about that, after all you did for me, goes as it lays; and we'll appropriate a million dollars a year for Black-hall stamps, and single-tax fixings generally.—Here's that train at last. Look at the coon's face. Wouldn't that burn out a coil! Looks as if he'd got it between the bumpers."

It was the face of the porter which had called forth this remark. He was a battered wreck, his head twisted awry, an eye closed, and one whole side of his face—jaw, cheek and nose—looking as if crushed by some ponderous projectile. The claim agent's quick eye took in his plight at a glance—how Mr. Courtright gave him a folded bit of paper; how the negro slunk off as if to keep from sight—and Mr. Feek sauntered after him. The alighting of the Rev-

erend Mr. Courtright, Mr. Feek's pastor, coming home with his pretty soprano after a month of wonderfully successful revival meetings; the embrace in which he was folded by his wife, who had been rendered trebly anxious by the many telegrams from Angus Falls, inquiring after his health; Amy's expressions of heartfelt thanks to Miss Dearwester for her care over him; the laugh at Mrs. Dearwester's suggestion that she had not supposed that Ollie had saved him from cannibals, or anything like that; the change in Mrs. Courtright's expression when she learned that they had been for a day and two nights in the special car alone—all these interesting matters have lost their interest for Mr. Feek, who, following the porter to the office of Doctor Aylesbury, sees him hand to that physician the folded slip of paper, and learns that "George" had run against a milepost in the dark.

"Better look out for your pay, Doctor," said Feek, calling the leech aside. "These coons are pretty slippery."

"Oh, I'm amply guaranteed, sir," said the doctor, looking at the paper as if for confirmation of the statement, "amply guaranteed."

"Morgan, you've got to go with me on this vacation. The doctors say I mustn't work; but I'm going to put these ideas I've been telling you about into shape for the first series of sermons, in which I shall preach actual Christianity."

The two men had become teacher and pupil again, only Morgan Yeager was now the instructor. Time after time they had met in the minister's study, and wrestled with the problem for failing to solve which

every dead and condemned civilization has received sentence, the problem of the stripping by the few from the many of the residue of the day's product, when life has been sustained—called by economists the question of the distribution of wealth. Morgan and Emerson, however, attacked the great riddle with new hope; for they had that new answer to it given by the pale compositor of San Francisco in his epoch-making book; and now, a few days after Emerson's return from Angus Falls, he was urging Morgan to go with him on his vacation, so that every doubt and every fault in statement might be solved and corrected. But Morgan said no.

"Why," queried Emerson, "you're not too proud, are you, to be my guest and tutor at my expense?"

"No," replied Morgan; "but it isn't necessary. You've mastered the subject—and added to it a lot of your own peculiar transcendentalism."

"In other words, I see in it more than your mathematics recognizes?"

"Well, in any case, I've done you all the harm I can, and I may as well attend to other mischief," Morgan replied.

"Good, you mean."

"Harm, I think," protested Morgan, "as to your case."

"Why harm, now?" queried Emerson. "I never was so happy in my life as I am in the certainty that there is nothing in nature, nothing in God's decree, which makes necessary either the debauching riches of the rich, or the murderous struggle for riches of the middle class, or the unrewarded toil and embruting poverty and fear of the great mass of men.

Why, I never was so happy in my life. It clears God of the old indictment that I just tried to forget."

"But you have always preached the power of individual right-doing to redeem society," urged Morgan. "Weren't you happy in that?"

"Well, it was this way," answered Emerson. "Long ago, I got hold of Adam Smith and the rest of his tribe, and was taught that poverty, vice, crime, war, pestilence and famine were necessary factors in human life, because people increased so fast, and means of living so slowly."

"I know," nodded Morgan; "Malthus, and the 'wage-fund,' and 'diminishing returns,' and finally 'the survival of the fittest' as applied to human society. I know the whole infernal patter."

"Much better than I ever did, or ever shall," replied Emerson; "but I knew it well enough to know that it was a lie. Dimly, I saw that the world isn't half peopled, or its lands half occupied."

"Tilled, you mean," suggested Morgan; "used."

"I never made any such distinctions," answered Emerson; "and yet I knew that the whole thing was a lie."

"Because of—what?" asked Morgan.

*"Because of God."*

There was a long silence. Emerson seemed to think his statement complete. Morgan appeared to be waiting for its completion.

"I'm a political economist," said he at last; and neither seemed to see anything incongruous in this tramp-lecturer's making of such a claim. "I'm a political economist. I don't take God into the calculation at all."

"But to me," responded Emerson, "there is no problem without Him; and your solution is made up of nothing else. That old political economy was blasphemy. I should have cursed God and died, if once the conviction had fully got hold of me that He had created man, and put him on this floating raft of a world without provisions for every soul on board for ever; so that only the strong might really live, by making the weak serve them—by compelling the weak to starve, and to devour one another as they do and always have done, like wolves. Such a creation would be a devil's work, not God's; and no devil yet thought of has been accused of such transcendent deviltry as so-called Christians lay at the door of a God they call all-wise and all-merciful, in accepting such things as these. Whatever may be their profession or communion, such men are atheists!"

Morgan sat mute. Pupil and teacher were changing places again. When he spoke, it was in one of those commonplaces with which we Anglo-Saxons cloak such impulses as may come to us to show our hearts.

"That's good!" said he. "I must steal that for my talks.—Well, you had to account for the submerged tenth—"

"And the other tenths, struggling and strangling to keep from submersion, with the feet of the few on their shoulders?"

"Yes," said Morgan, accepting the words; "how did you account for this submersion business?—Intemperance? That's the conventional church way."

"For a while," responded Emerson, "I accounted for it as the result of intemperance, and the like. But that didn't last long—it wouldn't do as a reason, when so

many millions of the temperate and industrious are 'submerged,' and so many more are intemperate because they are poor. No, I had sense enough to see that there must be some general cause, and so I sought for a general remedy. I took the optimistic attitude that individual righteousness would do much, and progress in science and invention would do the rest. That old assertion that the state of Texas could support the population of the world, somehow, seemed to contain argument."

Morgan laughed sarcastically.

"Optimistic!" he repeated. "Of all the silly, ostrich-headed, transparent dodges in the world, this modern stand-pat optimism is the most idiotic! If your ship is driving upon the rocks of a lee shore, call it a safe harbor, and you're an 'optimist.' Deny evils as plain as the sun, and you're an 'optimist.' It's the happy-go-lucky fool's paradise of those who can't think, who won't think, or who do think, and want to quit. When a man comes along with a remedy, he is a pessimist, because he has to recognize a disease before he can treat it. Was there ever such a crazy contradiction? The man with the hope, the pessimist; the one who says 'Let things drift, but deny the drifting!' the optimist! And yet some people—"

"Yes," broke in Emerson, "quite right. That fool's paradise was mine. I've been much secluded from the world, Morgan. Mostly, like all ministers, I have dealt with women and children, and men who don't think, or who don't give me the benefit if they do."

"The average church crowd," said Morgan.

"Yes," said the minister, withholding the merited

rebuke, "and my little imitation-work of pastoral calls—and administering economic morphine as you call it—has kept me busy. Your speech the night you were arrested was bitter, but was really the intrusion of the knowledge of good and evil into my fool's paradise. I had no idea you had heard my sermon, till I heard your answer."

"Odd that I heard you, and had no idea who you were, isn't it?" remarked Morgan. "I wonder if the pew ever sees the real man in the pulpit?"

"I'm glad you didn't know me," replied Emerson; "or you might have refrained from attacking me as you did, and I might never have seen the central truth of organized human life, or the evils flowing from our failure to square our collective life with this central truth—the cause of poverty. The thing dazzles me, old man—an all-pervading cause, which either has produced all evil inequalities of wealth, past and present, or would have produced them in the absence of all others; a cause which, when other economic evils are slain, devours their carcasses, absorbs their strength, and strengthens as they weaken, and because they weaken. So that reform itself, if directed at other wrongs, feeds and nourishes this bottom wrong—it's the biggest thing I ever comprehended!"

"Sometime," said Morgan, "you'd have seen that Private earth-owning is all this, if I had never jumped on you."

"I don't believe it," answered Emerson. "You were sent to give me light—not only as to the cause, but to make me see how this evil may be removed, easily, simply, and without much institutional innovation; and how the evil of poverty, with its sin and diseases,



will go with it—how man may be made free to nourish and preserve his body, and to develop his mind.”

“Yes,” assented Morgan, gazing once more upon his Vision; “and then his goal will be attained!”

“No!” cried Emerson. “Then he will have reached the beginning of his journey, the place where men like me may begin their ministries. God could not make of man a living soul until He had made of him an earthly body. We preachers have been trying to save souls in marred and unmade bodies, so driven by their necessities that they could not think of their souls. The body comes first; and men will never think of their souls so long as we make it so hard for them to get their livings. Let’s make men’s bodies free, and their wages just, so that they may struggle up to the spiritual.”

“Soul and spirit,” said Morgan, “don’t interest me much. One world at a time.”

“So clear as to some things!” cried Courtright; “so blind as to others! And yourself the type of the man who lives the spiritual life, without knowing it—but you’ll see that sometime: I was asking how you can say that you’ve done me harm?”

“That’s easy,” was the careless reply. “You’ll not be content with knowing the truth. You’ll begin preaching it to this average American congregation of yours, and the fat will be in the fire.”

“Do you think,” asked Emerson in amazement, “that my people will criticize me for preaching any religious truth I may become possessed of?”

“I’m speaking,” answered Morgan, “of economic truths.”

“Why, don’t you see,” cried Emerson, “that the

religion of Jesus is a system of economics, based on love? There are two lines of economics in His teachings, to one of theology. Will they criticize me for teaching the economics of Jesus?"

"Criticize!" echoed Morgan bitterly. "Oh, no, they won't criticize! If you proceed on the theory that the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Golden Rule are things with real economic and industrial meanings, to be put into institutions, they'll fire you bodily. They'll put you on a ministerial blacklist that will make you a tramp. And they'll hound you to disgrace and death. These spiritual godchildren of yours will fall away from you. The old matrons, who give such edifying testimony, will show you that the Apache women who stick burning splinters into the wounded, have sisters right under the drippings of the sanctuary. What they will do to you will be plenty!"

"Morgan," said Emerson with a smile, "if you knew my people, as I know them, I should say you were crazy."

So parted the two friends—Courtright going on his vacation which he regarded as a retreat, a preparation, and Yeager to live his strange life, sometimes in Lattimore, but oftener in some of the surrounding towns and villages, and all the time wondering if there were not some truth in Mrs. Dearwester's suggestion that his cause could scarcely be advanced by his making a tramp of himself.

Somewhere off in New York or Boston was the head of a "Propaganda Association" who sent Morgan lists of names of people upon whom it would be well for him to call, scattered outposts of the army.

of his crusade, far-wandering members of that unorganized Brotherhood which the Prophet of San Francisco founded, and which has tied together in a union stronger than that of the flesh, a great family of the rarest souls the world has seen. Infrequently he got remittances from the "Propaganda Association," and while these lasted, eked out by the profits from the sale of books, Morgan taught on street corners, or in such rooms as opened to him, his doctrine of emancipated man—a lone fighter assailing a foe so great as to be unconscious of the blows.

When he got back to Lattimore, he hurried to Mrs. Dearwester's to learn if anything had developed in Emerson's plan to apply the doctrines of his religion to the economic conditions of the day, and to discuss his prospects in making this interesting experiment.

"He will do something," said Morgan, allowing his disdain for conventional religious teachings to carry him, as usual, into indefensible modes of expression. "He won't preach the rot he had going when I found him—neither the elegant sort of his regular sermons, or the sensational kind he developed under pressure. I don't know what to look for. He won't take my advice about being diplomatic at all."

"Well, I should hope not," answered Mrs. Dearwester, "if you preach what you practise."

"I didn't, in this case," confessed Morgan. "I tried to get him to hold in, except in his private conversations."

"Told him, I s'pose," suggested Mrs. Dearwester, "that you'd got your start suppressing the truth."

"I'm different," replied Morgan. "I had nothing to lose."

"Nothing except everything in the world," she answered. "You're every bit as smart as Emerson Courtright, Morgan Yeager, and had just as much to lose by making yourself an outcast. Both fools, for that matter. Folks have always been divided into the pickerels and the minnows, and always will be."

"No!" cried Morgan. "The change is coming faster than we can imagine. *So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth: and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how!*"

"Humph!" said Mrs. Dearwester. "A pretty infidel you are—to quote Scripture!"

"Well, maybe I am," he replied; "but I read Scripture well enough to know that the Pharisees are always in the chief seats in the synagogues, and that the greatest of all reformers—the one with the central truth—went against them and the high priests, and was put out of the way for the good of morality and in the name of God. I'm afraid I've ruined Emerson. I didn't realize how inseparable principle and life are with him. If he preaches the truth as well as I'm afraid he knows it, he's gone!"

Such were the biased views of Morgan Yeager as to the momentous experiment of his friend—that of putting the wine of a new application into the old church-skins of the faith.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE OLD MAN

A man who, at somewhat less than thirty, has risen to a division superintendency in the Halliday System, ought to be above the plane in which sentiment—thrills and pulsations, mere instincts, impulses shared with the beasts of the field—could sway him from the pursuit of those achievements in money and power which alone, to the properly standardized mind, constitute success. His brain should be as coldly direct in obedience to his will as one of his engines to that of the engineer. The energy wasted, perhaps inevitably, in thoughts which are recognized as likely to come with the fuller crimson burning on the robin's breast, should be prevented as far as practicable; and as to the irreducible minimum, should be disposed of (like the vexatious expansion and contraction in the metals of machinery) by some well-recognized technical expedient (like the carrying on of casual flirtations, harmless "affairs") which permits the machine to run on undisturbedly. Such a man should be able to keep any of these "affairs" well within the "margin-of-safety" line, and to bring them to a stop instantly. He should be ashamed to admit the possibility of any such thing coming between him and business or diverting him from the pursuit of anything necessary to his career. So reasoned Super-

intendent John Bloodgood as he sat in his office, trying to get himself in hand.

To his chief clerk Mr. Bloodgood was quite the same as usual. We all lead double lives—nay, triple, quadruple lives. To his wife and family, Mr. A. is one man; to the down-town world quite another. To the various people who see him only occasionally, or with whom he carries on epistolary correspondence, commercial, amicable or amatory, he is a third, fourth and fifth—and so on *ad infinitum*. To one he may be a poet; to another, a Shylock. To himself he is a person, you may be sure, quite different from any of these; and to the eye of Omniscience a creature totally unlike the truest of them.

Now, to Mrs. Hess-Alleyne, Jack was the first sip from the cup she had vowed broken-heartedly nevermore to taste; and to be prized accordingly. It was so delectable to know that her mature charms could awaken love in this young man, and that she herself was still capable of giving love for love—that perilous exchange which had been her undoing. True, a Hess might look higher than a Bloodgood—but a Hess might make a Bloodgood almost anything; and there were horrid London stories, and the Alleyne connections at New York and Newport and elsewhere—and it's love, it's love that makes the world go round!

It was in this character that Mr. Bloodgood sought to write as he penned a letter to his Lady of the Flaxen Tresses—more flaxen, he remembered, than formerly.

“My Dear Mildred,” he wrote: “You may not remember that once (in those dear days at the Cata-

ract House) you said I might call you Mildred. There is a reason for my suspecting that you may have withdrawn the permission—your letters say nothing of ‘Jack,’ but only mention ‘Mr. Bloodgood’—a person for whom in this connection, or, in my present state of mind, in any other, I have very little use. I shall regard his intrusion between us again as a rebuke from you for reminding you of a privilege, the giving of which you have chosen to forget.

“I never saw anything in *Lucile* until I read the passages marked by you in the volume you were so lovely as to send to me—since which time I have found a strange new interest in the whole romance. Perhaps you are giving me an inner experience which enables me to see new beauties in love-poems, hidden from me hitherto. Else, why is it that the image before my eyes when I read of some fair lady’s manifold allurements is, not that of the text, but—”

Mr. Bloodgood leaned back, dropping his pen as if in weariness or disgust. The photograph of Mrs. Hess-Alleyne—quite a handsome photograph, too—he turned face down on the desk, where it stood day by day, smiling its best Mayfair smile. Unlocking a little drawer marked “Private,” he drew out a half-tone picture of a gipsy maiden, which, even in the inevitable imperfection of newspaper illustration, showed the great dark eyes, oval features, and ebon hair which fit the part. At the bottom was printed: “Miss Olive Dearwester, of the musical faculty of Tudor College. Her songs from *Carmen* in costume were the feature of the Inter-State Musical Festival last evening.”

Mr. Bloodgood put to his lips the bit of paper, which was worn and rumpled as if from frequent handling. Then he hastily returned it to its drawer, which he locked, before answering the buzzer which announced that his chief clerk wished to talk with him over the telephone from the next room.

"Who is it?" he asked. "Whitlock? Who's Whitlock? Oh, yes; I remember him now. . . . Controls the Grant County delegation? . . . Well, give him what he wants in the way of passes. . . . I'm busy. . . . Wants a private interview with me! . . . Well, send him in, then; but try to keep as many of these leg-pullers out as you can, O'Neill—and, say, O'Neill, see if you can't send Mr. Feek to me at once."

Mr. Whitlock met that one of the numerous John Bloodgoods known, all over the division, as the Old Man. An infant in arms would be the Old Man if he could be made division superintendent. The Old Man and Mr. Whitlock seemed to join in battle on some issue, the nature of which was kept from all ears by carefully closed doors.

"I tell you, Mr. Whitlock," said the superintendent, "you're asking too much. We think a good deal of Grant County: Mr. Halliday always asks about you and 'the loyal Grant County crowd' as he calls it. We're anxious to give you what you want. But even if the delegation went to the Pops, we couldn't do it. If the Pendleton System wants 'em bad enough—"

"Oh, well now," said Whitlock soothingly, "you know I never'd go over to the Pendleton crowd. I was just telling you what some of the boys are *talking*. What *can* you do, Mr. Bloodgood?"



Bloodgood made some figures on a piece of paper, showed them to Whitlock, tore it to strips, and burned the strips in lighting a fresh cigar.

"Well," said Whitlock dubiously, "I'll see if I can get along on that. Send Feek up to the convention, and with his help I'll try and make it do."

Exit Mr. Whitlock: Enter Mr. Feek.

"See here, Feek," said Bloodgood, still "the Old Man," "you know Whitlock, of Grant County?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I'm so situated that I have to."

"He called just now—"

"For how much?" asked Mr. Feek.

"Never mind," Mr. Bloodgood responded laughingly; "it was plenty—and he doesn't get it all. Do you regard that Grant County delegation as important?"

"Well," answered Feek slowly, "with a United States senatorship at stake, played for on the other side by an old Pendleton, everything is important."

Mr. Bloodgood pondered for a moment on the situation. Senator Hazard, the present incumbent, represented the Halliday System at Washington. Pendleton, anxious to strengthen his line of senators, so as to secure favorable action on certain river-bank protection and harbor-improvement measures, as well as to make sure of the proper protection to his trans-continental lines by the killing off of the pestilent Isthmian Canal bill, had brought out an opposition candidate. The people? They were asleep, as usual. They had abdicated in favor of the strongest claimant for the throne among such men as Halliday and Pendleton. Who can blame him who sat down in

the vacant chair of state?—General Hess had cautioned Bloodgood as to the importance of this matter.

"There are a lot of little claims up there," said Bloodgood, "growing out of fires set by engines, aren't there?"

"Yes," answered Feek, pulling from his pocket a bunch of papers. "There are—"

"Never mind! Go up and settle them," said Mr. Bloodgood. "Happen up there a few days ahead of the convention, and stay. Watch Whitlock, and if I've cut him down too low, draw on me."

"All right," answered Feek; "and if that's all, I'd like to ask if you'd be willing to look into a scheme for preventing collisions?"

"No," answered Mr. Bloodgood, "they're mostly fakes, and they're not business. Been investing?"

"No," answered Feek, reddening. "The price of a suit of clothes to the fellow that got it up, that's all."

"I'd advise you to drop it," replied Mr. Bloodgood. "Let the mechanical department look out for the mechanical matters. We're in the operating line. Anything more?"

"Only one little matter," replied Feek. "I was looking for Speck Toombs, the porter you have had on your car, and I don't find him. I may want him as a witness in—in some matters that are likely to come up."

"I didn't like him," replied the superintendent. "I got it into my head that he's a thief. We don't want him on the car; but if he's needed for anything, why, find some place for him, and keep him until we're through with him. What do you want him for?"

"Oh, nothing that has materialized yet," answered Feek. "When it does, I'll take it up with you. But I'd like to keep him where we can find him."

"All right," was the reply, "find him, and we'll make a place for him. Anything more?"

Thoroughly businesslike, one would say, as big business is done in big and little offices of big corporations. Mr. Bloodgood was even so far adjusted to the normal that he resumed writing, quite with the air of doing well the thing worth doing at all. He wrote his sister a note, expressing the hope that she and Emerson would soon return, and that her husband would be well, and quite cured of the fad she thought he was developing for the wild notion of making the First Church a working-man's church. "Returning health," he concluded, "will restore his intellectual balance, depend upon it, and he will see the impossibility of such a thing."

"He isn't such a fool as that," thought he. "But my judgment that it was a misstep for Amy to marry him is being vindicated. He's mixing up in my affairs too much. He vetoed my plan for a sort of family trip up to Angus Falls in the car; and I know well enough that he told Olive's mother about this."

The "this" was the letter to the fair Mildred, sent disrespectfully spinning into the letter basket.

"He'd evidently like to edge himself into a sort of '*loco parentis*' status. Not if I were Amy, by a long shot! Confound him, if this affair with Mildred goes through, young Vance or even the Halliday boy might have been in his place, instead of an infant phenomenon of a preacher! I'm having the same experience with him now that I had at school—we

split when we get to the coöperating stage. But this fatherly business with Olive won't do. No man can come between me and that girl without getting hurt! And she's got more than parents enough now! If it weren't for her mother, I could win out, I know. Damn a fool, anyhow! A minute ago I was blaming Amy for her lovesick folly—I was for giving Olive up: now I'm laying plans for getting her.—And give up the only daughter of General Hess, the man who represents the oil crowd's money in the Halliday System, and will be the whole thing within ten years, and can turn it over to his son-in-law in time? I can't do that, for a pair of soft lips and unfathomable eyes, even when they go with such a voice, such a form, such a face, such a heart! I can't do it for *anything*!—And yet I can't give her up: it's impossible! Mildred owns me; Olive controls me. I must marry the one: but—what was the statement of his dilemma with Lizzie Hexham that Eugene Wrayburn gave? 'Impossible to give her up; impossible to marry her.' Surely the time must come, or be made to come, when Olive will need friends—a friend who will be entitled to her consideration—and, give me only a little more chance than I have had, and I shall have her—and shall give nothing up."

Could Mr. Feek or Mr. Whitlock have seen the Old Man now, and have been gifted with some telepathic view of his thoughts, either of those gentlemen would have been astonished. Mr. Bloodgood was astonished himself; but scarcely surprised. He knew that the sudden resolve not to be balked in his designs was one likely to be ruinous to him; but he recognized in himself one of those men in whom

intense self-control is met by volcanic forces needing repression. He had begun his letter to Mildred with sage reflections as to the "margin of safety." He had finished it with the resolve that, giving up nothing, he would conquer all. He looked in the mirror which was set into the wall back of his coat-rack, and scanned the face of John Bloodgood to see if his ruthless purpose showed in his expression.

"You look quite the same," said he to his double, "as you did at the committee-meeting last night—you fool!"

At the committee-meeting, however, his hands had not trembled, nor his eyes dilated with this strange intensification of purpose.

"You blame Amy," said he, continuing his remarks, "because she went hell-bent into the arms of the man that won her; and now what is it *you've* resolved to do! It's in the Bloodgood breed. Sane on everything but the love-problem, and as impulsive as savages on that. But you're not going wild, Jack, old man, if it *is* in the breed. Lucky that the will to control goes with the disposition to break over. You're going to be as wise as a serpent, and you'll not risk everything as you said you would just now. And, again, I don't know but you will!"

## CHAPTER XII

### THE FLESHING OF A MAIDEN SWORD

"The average church crowd," was Morgan Yeager's expression—one which may not have been meant disrespectfully, but which is scarcely proper for our adoption as we see them trooping into the church that first Sunday morning after their beloved pastor's absence.

Perhaps we had better say that it was a typical congregation of American church-goers, east or west. There were not so many tall hats as in the east, and the cutaway coats and business frocks would have outvoted the Prince Alberts overwhelmingly: but the two combined would have outnumbered the workman's Sunday suit by fifty to one. However, on the subject-matter of the minister's sermon, a composite representation of the attitudes of these people could not have been distinguished from that of any of the congregations then assembling, in either of the Portlands, in Denver, in Burlington (Iowa or Vermont), in Syracuse or Kalamazoo, or, in fact, in Birmingham or London, whether the city taken be English or American.

Mr. Courtright, with his orator's race-horse pulse singing in his ears as the time approaches to confront his audience, is in no condition or position to speculate calmly upon the effect of such a deliverance as he has in mind, upon such an audience. Morgan Yeager, however, is under no such disability, as he sits where he can

see those entering. Morgan's expressions are always subject to amendment; but we may well profit by his powers of observation, his knowledge of character, his deep study of the effects of new doctrines, and his thought on this very situation, and, temporarily, we may look through his eyes.

Mr. Dewey, the banker, father of the fresh young chairman of the music committee, with his shiny hat well held up, his black coat buttoned, his mutton-chop whiskers accurately arranged, his smooth-shaven lips closed in a prim line under his almost Hebrew nose, enters, stands very erect as Mrs. Dewey and the Dewey children arrange themselves in the pew, and then sits down. They all bow themselves for a moment in silent prayer.

"It'll take him three days," says Mr. Yeager, "to figure out how Emerson's ideas, if put into effect, would act upon down-town property, real-estate mortgages and interest rates. Then he'll smile blandly, and dig up the hatchet."

Mrs. Dewey sits beside him in rich attire, her hat the envy of all feminine onlookers. She is girlish in manner; and is president of the church organization of young people, despite the generosity of her figure and her growing family, which includes Miss Dewey, a dashing *débutante*, and fresh young Mr. Dewey, an usher.

"She'll think it a corking sermon," says Morgan, referring to the matron; "but when old hook-nose there smells out the economic rat, she'll swing more influence into line against him than her husband can command."

Captain and Mrs. Tolliver come in, she gentle and

meek-looking, he deep in real-estate schemes, pending the opening of the services.

"His southern love of oratory will carry him away while he listens," says Morgan; "but he'll have blind-staggers of rage if he ever stops to figure out what this reform would do to such men as he and such schemes as his."

Mr. Giddings of the *Lattimore Herald*, ignoring the ushers, drops into a seat next the aisle at the extreme rear, and sits as if he expected a fire panic.

"He'll make all the news he can out of it," says Morgan. "He'll call a socialist an anarchist, or vice versa, or any reformer who is neither, he will call either to make a good story of it. And he'll know better all the time, and won't care much how the preacher comes out."

Mr. Will Lattimore, legal adviser of all the railways and the corporations making up the System as affecting Lattimore, enters briskly with his family—correctly dressed, smooth-shaven and smiling, and takes his seat with a precision of movement like that of some well-oiled machine. He is the son of General Lattimore, and easily the head of the local bar, now that Judge Bloodgood has been elevated to the bench.

"He'll avoid taking sides, if he can," says Morgan; "and he will probably never vote on any question. But he'll be held responsible by his employers for his attitude in this church toward any harmful agitation, and will be fingering the hidden wires accordingly."

Mr. Kittrick, road-master of one of the railways, comes down the aisle, red-faced, red-mustached, and burly from his early life as a track-laborer.



"They'll pull the strings," says Morgan, "and he'll dance or walk the plank."

Mrs. Aylesbury, president of the W. C. T. U., and active in women's clubs, rustles to her pew, her mind filled with her various duties—her Sunday-school class after services, her paper on Early Japanese Art for Sorosis Monday afternoon, her Mothers' Child-Study Club for Tuesday evening, her Associated Charities and prayer-meeting for Wednesday and Thursday, her reception to the president and faculty of Tudor College on Friday, and her discussion of the influence of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks upon the rise of universities in Europe at the church history circle on Saturday. "A full life," says she, sighing, "but so burdensome, sometimes!"

"She'll fight him like a wildcat from the word go," says Morgan.

Enter with her, her husband, Doctor Aylesbury, all hair and glasses.

"Negligible," says Morgan—erring greatly, in this case, if in no other; as Mr. Feek could have told him.

A little stooped, as he follows young Mr. Dewey to his pew, but tall and commanding, his long hair falling down over his collar, comes Doctor Jones of Tudor College. A kindly-looking man, and one to be selected for hard work.

"He'll be inclined to stand by the preacher's right to say the thing he thinks Jesus would say," says Morgan. "But how about the million dollars he hopes to get from old Halliday for his college? He can't be free in such a case, so long as he's trying to bond the economic policy of his college for an endowment."

Mr. V. W. Feek gets as close to the Bloodgood

pew as he can. He is only a brother-in-law in the church, carrying his religion in his wife's name, as he says. Yet as he sits down, Morgan feels that his wife's influence will be his, and that *he* is not negligible, whoever else may be.

"If there's anything crooked or dirty to do, and there will be," says Morgan, "he'll be in it."

It is nearly time for the services to begin, and the Bloodgood pew is still vacant. At last Judge Bloodgood comes in with his wife, his daughter and his son. His is a tall, elderly figure, with white hair clustering about the head—a man with the paleness of the cloister, making his dark eyes look darker by contrast; one of the men in whom our government is really vested, the only class set apart from their fellow-citizens in the United States by the presumption that the power selecting them for public service makes no mistakes, and therefore chosen for life. Even here, as becomes a ruler, Judge Bloodgood seems to move in an atmosphere of the unapproachable dignity of a United States judge. Yet even he is not spared by the merciless critic through whose eyes we are looking.

"When General Hess of the Halliday System, who made you, sits down on you about this coming fight," says Morgan, "for harboring in your church a dangerous agitator, even your own son-in-law, will you earn your place on the bench, or will you stay by Emerson? I bet on Hess!"

So many of the great congregation Morgan knew by sight and fame. The other hundreds he did not take into consideration. They were the praying women, the God-fearing men, who followed their leaders

and served their Maker in the way in which they had been brought up, and who would not count in any struggle, but only be counted.

*And the government shall be upon his shoulders.*

This was Emerson's first text after his conversion—or perversion, as some may prefer to call it—the first of the new series of sermons entitled *Outlines for The Christian State*.

No one was at all startled. It seemed such a conventional text for a beautiful sermon on cologne-water reform.

"This old text," said he, "embodies the heart of the old Jewish Messianic thought—a government of righteousness. All the Hebrew prophets sought to reform their government. They were killed because they disturbed those who laid field to field until there was no room for the poor, those who changed money in the Temple and those who sold doves. If a friendless man should effectively denounce here and now the things in our government that Hosea and Amos and Elijah and Isaiah prophesied against then, he would be arrested on some trumped-up charge, and either driven out, or kept in prison—so far is America from being a country where thought and speech are free."

Here he looked at the stocky, brown-eyed man over by the pillar, and paused. One or two men in the few working-men's Sunday suits seemed to prick up their ears as at something unexpected.

"We think of a prophet as of some one able in some way to foretell the future," he went on. "This is the lowest and most barbarous sense of the word. We must not forget that in the higher, better sense, it means a man filled with divine illumination, one

who sees deeply into things, and feels truly the secrets of the mysterious abysses of causation which are too profound for the brain, but not beyond the plummet of the rightly attuned soul. Such men exist in all ages. There is no reason for giving to these fiery old Hebrew reformers the name of prophet, and denying it to Saint Francis of Assisi, and John Ball, and Wyclif, and Savonarola, and Shelley, and Whitman, and Henry George."

Mr. Dewey leaned forward and put his hand to his ear, as if not quite sure that he had heard correctly. Judge Bloodgood started, looked for a moment across the placid face of Amy into the eyes of his son the superintendent, flushed to his white hair, and sat rigid. Morgan Yeager shrank close up to his column, and looked pityingly at Emerson.

"All the prophets, ancient and modern," went on Mr. Courtright, "saw and felt that the heart of the problem of righteousness is a question of government; and against the governments of their time, they dashed themselves in pieces. Isaiah saw, not a mystical realm for disembodied spirits, but a New Jerusalem in Judea, made up of freed men and women, under the leadership of the Christ, upon whose shoulders rested the government—the Prince of Peace.

"And Jesus came, with the same political message. He was a Jew, with the viewpoint of the Jewish prophets. His Kingdom of God was the fundamentally righteous, but purely human society of which the prophets had spoken. He preached a God of the living, not a God of the dead. He tried for long, long months to place Himself at the head of the Hebrew race as its political leader, that He might

found His kingdom based upon the voluntary discipleship of all His people, whose king should be the servant of all, in which the supreme tribunal should be love—love, through the magic and strength of which the power of Rome, the rule of Herod, the party of the Pharisees, and the faction of the Sadducees, together with all the worn-out formalism and ritualism of the Jews, should be dissolved away in a new and beautiful realm in which God in every human heart should be king.”

The “saner” and more “conservative” portions of the congregation—bankers like Dewey, speculators like Tolliver, and representatives of “interests” like Lattimore and Bloodgood, breathed more freely at this. It sounded so much more harmless and preacherish and churchy. Some of them even enjoyed a wonderful piece of description which Emerson gave them, depicting the strange spectacle of the first months of the ministry of Jesus: how the great Agitator went about preaching good tidings to the poor, healing the sick, hailed by thousands under the dear name of “Teacher,” followed by an army so large as to fill all parties in Jerusalem with fear—an army of communists who were often shelterless and sometimes hungry, but who, somehow, never did violence, and, somehow, were always fed; and who were strong enough, had they taken the sword, to overcome the city. Then he returned to that age-long “death grapple in the darkness ’twixt old systems and the Word,” and of the life of Jesus as the typical reformer’s life.

“No man,” said he, “was ever more bitterly disappointed than this gentle Leader of a peaceful

proletariate. That He expected things to turn out differently, is no more than He implied in His terrible complaint, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!' His doctrine of love, the doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, was to Him so clearly the only right and practicable thing for a sane person to believe, the only remedy for the terrible state of the world, that its rejection was inconceivable. It seemed that the nation must adopt it as its law. This is the tragedy in the lives of all reformers. The truths they see so plainly: how can it be that every honest man can not see? The reformer walks in an atmosphere of unfaith which is incredible to him until hard experience brings home its bitter truth: and so it was with Jesus. When the prominent men of the city, the priests, the judges, the religious classes and all the rich, proved blind to the fair prospect held out to them and all men, and refused to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, the dark waters of disappointment closed over Him, and His great heart broke. The cross of wood was a symbol of the more agonizing spiritual crucifixion which He had so long suffered."

Some of the older members scented heresy in this; but heresy is not so bad, now, if it assail nothing more closely connected with business than the God-head. Put thus baldly, none would have admitted this; but, with the proper periphrasis, all would have done so.

"Jesus failed!" Emerson paused for the words to produce the shock he desired. "Jesus failed to place Himself at the head of His nation because, under the law of love, He could not appeal to force as Mohammed

did. But had He succeeded, how would His government have compared with ours? And when He sent His apostles out upon their mission—which is not yet ended, and can not end, or well begin, until every government shall be His—what sort of social conditions did He expect them to bring about as compared with ours?

“He said to him who asked for the way to eternal life, ‘Keep the commandments.’ And when He was asked, ‘Which?’ He answered first, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’

“But our government makes a business of killing. It kills by its armies and navies. And where it kills one thus, it kills thousands by indirection. It kills an army of railway men and passengers every year; because it permits our highways to be operated carelessly and cruelly by private capital, instead of operating them carefully and humanely itself.”

John Bloodgood’s eyes flashed here, and Amy, seeing the bearing of this, glanced at him in a sort of fright.

“It kills millions,” Emerson went on, “by allowing those things which belong to all to be grasped by the few. It kills in slums in which land-monopoly, the creature of government, suffocates women and children for want of space; it kills in the wilderness, whither land-monopoly drives men; it kills with cold, in leaving in some hands the fuel God made for all; it kills with nakedness and penury by letting some men crowd off the land those for whose tillage it was made. It kills in myriads, by allowing the face of nature to be engrossed, so that men are helpless, landless, workless, and forced to bid the bread out

of their own mouths in the auction-shambles of the labor market. This government which we call Christian, and governments like it—all governments called great—are machines for murder. Our governors and legislators are its agents; our courts are tribunals for regulating its commission. And every one who fails to make his protest is accessory to murder, and has hands red with innocent blood!"

Judge Bloodgood rose partly as if to depart; but sat down again, his face now set and drawn as if in some great effort at self-control.

"The next commandment Jesus mentioned," continued Emerson, "is 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' Has our government clean skirts as to this? I speak not of the gross partnership between our cities and the crime, by which taxpayers accept the price of shame in reduction of the taxes they should pay. The coffers of this church are swelled by contributions such as this, and I myself am thus a partaker in the guilt. Making acknowledgment of this stain upon us all, let us pass to the cause of more adulteries than all other causes, the poverty and business stress which, to millions of men and women, forbid marriage. For, blush at the statement as we may, where marriage is forbidden or prevented, adultery takes its place, and the holiest affections are turned awry, like distorted, pit-grown plants, and become the most corroding vices."

Mrs. Aylesbury's fan went up to her face, and her eyes became fixed upon the pew before her.

"He said next," went on Emerson, all unconscious of this and other centers of shocked sensibilities, "'Thou shalt not steal,' and 'Thou shalt not bear



false witness.' In His government these commandments would have been observed. Under ours, how can one avoid theft? I take one-third of what a man produces on a farm in Kansas. I did not make the land; God made it. I did not make of it a farm; the man made it. I do nothing but take the third by force of a deed which is a mere warrant to keep people from doing anything on this land except by paying me for the privilege. Thus I reap where I have not sown, and this is theft; for the land is for all. But I can not stop the wrong even as to my own land. If I give the farm to the man, he becomes a landlord in his turn. Here I am guilty of taking this man's surplus through land-monopoly, through the crime of man's control of land which he personally does not use; and his life, and that of his family, is made poor and mean and dark; and from this socially caused wrong, there is no individual escape.

"This government refuses to furnish highways, and thus causes the theft and evil which accompanies the private owning of highways. Every time one pays fare or freight, he helps to rivet on the people the chains of the railway tyranny. If he is a great shipper, and receives secret favors, he assassinates his competitors by a weapon as vile as the midnight dagger. If he does not accept these, he goes to the wall. In order that these robbers of the road may not be disturbed, they seize upon our government itself, and to-day, two great robber barons of the highways are chaffering in the vote market of a near-by state legislature to buy a senator of the United States, a hired agent to drug the guards of the strong-box of the people's wealth. What of the commandment against

theft, in such a government? What would Jesus have said if such a government had been cited as resting upon His shoulders?"

The eyes of many a common citizen now turned to the Bloodgood pew; but its occupants sat looking straight before them. Mr. Feek was smiling.

"In such a society," went on the preacher, "men break every one of the narrower commandments. If they try, they can not avoid it. Then what of the last, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'? Doubtless no one is justified in failure to observe this, on account of any law or institution; and yet, the human will is weak. Jesus never thought that any follower of His, not in open apostasy, could do such an unchristian act as to hold wealth while others needed it. He would have seen gifts of thirty-million-dollar universities and the sowing broadcast of palatial libraries, confessions of deep guilt, in the rearing of these mountains of wealth in a world of poverty. His immediate followers had all things in common, and none wanted—and that when the pressure of poverty was as great as with us. The early Christians could not withhold from the neighbor whom they loved as themselves. If we loved so, could we withhold? Those churches were saved out of the whelming flood of penury made by Rome and her land system. But for us, such measure of right as church communism is impossible now. The early churches sought to save themselves out of the world. It could not be done then. It can not be done now. There is no individual or denominational salvation out of collective sins. No man liveth unto himself or dieth unto himself; if one member suffereth, all other members

suffer with it. We can not do right until we have made all men free to do right.

“To the women before me, the thought of personal impurity is impossible, except as a vague, far-off thing, like the unnamable offenses for which of old the cities of the plain were blotted out. Yet society makes each of you partakers in those things to which modern competition drives women. There is no delicate girl safely islanded in her home, but down in the stews has a sister on whose breast she stands, as on a stone in a flood, lifting herself above defilement—and God only knows who hath the greater stain. So it is with every one of us. May God forgive us all for this immemorial guilt, from which none may free himself until all are free!

“The effort of the church to save society through the individual has failed. It must always fail. Let us now address ourselves to the task of saving the individual through society.

“Think, friends, to-morrow children will pick coal in dark mines, and with withering souls guide senseless machines, and feed themselves as grist to the great engine of modern industrialism; men will go out in fruitless quest for work, leaving in hovels wives pressing wizened babes to milkless breasts; the white slaves of modern industry will go from the toil they can not hope to surmount, to lairs too small for wife and child, and thence to the spending of their wages in those gross pleasures which alone are within their reach; the moneyless shop-girl will go forth to her joyless amours, that her employer may not become bankrupt; and little children, as sweet as yours, will lie down in polluted air, in that

promiscuous comradeship of the sleep of poverty, which makes us wonder that the sweet flower of chastity in them can ever unfold the fragrant lily of its bloom: and all this because the government we make is evil; all this because of laws which we might change!

"I am not here to blame the rich: they are no more guilty than the poor. I myself am inevitably guilty with you. I blame no man. I judge no man. But I appeal to that social conscience, which is now, at last, stirring the great deep of mankind to a new application of divine truth. I tell you Christ has come again to earth. He bears, as of old, the marks of toil on His hands. As of old He is rejected of the rich and pious, and eats and drinks with publicans and sinners. As of old His gospel is good tidings to the poor. As of old, it is the rich that enter hardly into the Kingdom of Heaven. And my last word is, to you who hold your great possessions more dear than fellowship of the Spirit, which is brotherly love—Ye can not enter in. But you must be of the new kingdom of love and fellowship, or it will dash you and your arrogance in pieces!"

Having in these words and others cast the die, the Reverend Emerson Courtright sat down, listening, as to something afar off, to the swelling of the anthem and the throbbing voluntary to which his beloved people, turning their backs on him, marched out. He could see dimly the tall figure of John Bloodgood, and beside him the white-haired figure of his father; and last of all, as he went out of the swinging doors, the face with its frozen smile, the only face turned backward, of Mr. V. W. Feek.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SOLDIERS OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

Whenever any swift-moving dynamic social engine is unexpectedly shunted, even though it be from a well-used siding of Error back upon the long-obstructed Main-line of Truth, there are apt to be collision and shock and the crash of rending, as it thunders through those conventional wickets and posts usually regarded as the Pillars of social order.

So Emerson Courtright found it, as he looked forth from the wreckage of his church harmony—his congregation passing coldly from the church with almost none of the usual hand-shakings and words of cheer; Judge Bloodgood in livid anger wordlessly going away from the town on judicial business; John finding evident difficulty in treating his sister's husband with anything but contempt. That he had told the truth, he felt assured. That Truth, as of old, brought not peace, but a sword, surprised and almost terrified him. In such collisions, wrecks and disasters, there is never a hurling together of the trains of men's interests, but some woman is pinched and maimed and mayhap crushed between them.

So Amy Courtright discovered it to be, as she found this silver-tongued, forceful husband of hers, with the brow "crowned with godlike pathos" fighting for his very life in a *mêlée* which he himself had, as it seemed

to her, gratuitously provoked. Poor Amy! The life of a minister's wife had, at best, many things rougher than a crumpled rose-leaf in its couch for her—who had always stooped to her religious associations—even when the minister was idolized and triumphant. For one thing, Amy was a little jealous. There were many pretty women in Lattimore, whose sentiments toward Emerson before his marriage had been no secret. Amy's eyes sometimes flashed when she thought of him as making calls upon them—and she felt humbled when she called with him upon people who had no claim to equality with a Bloodgood, except the purely theoretical fraternity of church relations. But such a life with the minister in the case at odds with the best people, contemned by them, deprived of the support of the bankers, merchants and professional classes, and estranged from her father and brother, even—Amy turned alternately cold and hot as she thought of it, and tried to understand the reason for his course, as Emerson had explained it to her. She had thought it plain, until the explosion; but now, why go on, when it was clear that the best people, the “paying members,” as they were prone to call themselves, did not want such sermons? Jack came striding in upon her on Wednesday of the first week, and started her trouble.

“Since when did this become the meeting-place of the Grievance Committee of the ‘A. R. U.,’ Amy?” he asked, as she met him in the hall.

“The meeting-place for what?” queried she, mystified.

“Why, I met Overmeyer and Hicks and Strang, the three men among all my employees that make me the

most trouble with my men," said he, "going out as I came in."

"They came to see Emerson," she answered. "A number of working-men have called to see him this week. He's quite in demand as a speaker at their labor gatherings."

"Oh, he is, is he!" said John sneeringly. "I rather like the idea of paying pew-rent to support labor agitation; it's a new experience!"

"You mustn't talk to me like that, Jack!" flashed Amy. "Remember that you're speaking of my husband!"

"I know, Sis," said Jack soothingly, "and I beg your pardon. But this sudden flop hurts us. We must get him back on the old lines."

"Well, then," said Amy, "why don't you talk to him? Don't fly at me like that! I'm sure he didn't mean any harm. He read me some of his sermon, and has talked to me about these new ideas—new light, he thinks it is—and it sounded perfectly proper to me—until he preached it publicly, and then, of course, I could see how mistaken it was: but I can't influence him. I don't know how to argue, you know I don't, Jack."

"I can't talk to him, either," protested Jack. "He and I always fought when we disagreed, and my temper won't let me discuss respectfully such damned foolishness—pardon me, Sis—as this sociology of his. You must use your influence, dear. And when father gets himself in hand—he was in a white fury Monday morning—he'll have a session with him. I guess you and Doctor Jones must handle him until then—I'll 'phone the doctor. I tell you, Amy, though

it isn't a thing to be talked, that if he goes on the way he has begun, with the papers sending his sermons far and wide, every big interest in Lattimore and running into Lattimore must take it as a declaration of war: and you ought to know what that means. It means, for one thing, every big interest in America. A minister is as dependent on public sentiment as an alderman—more so—and the big interests control public sentiment. They can and will ruin him. And for God's sake, tell him to drop that gang of labor skates like a hot cake!"

• Mr. Bloodgood was quite himself, now, and cured, he thought, of that passionate deflection of energy to which the purposeful Bloodgoods were prone. He even congratulated himself that he had a friend within the camp of the agitation, in Amy, whose influence over Emerson could not fail, he reasoned, to turn the preacher aside from this insane course of religious teaching, which, if it were not so serious, would be uproariously ridiculous. How could a man, he thought, so flagrantly run counter to every prudential consideration! There must be some screw loose in Emerson's make-up, something structurally wrong; but to the inflexible, practical will of the Bloodgoods, this faddist must yield, and be brought into line. Mr. Bloodgood was so strong in his own regained self-control, that he was hopeful of the whole situation—and suddenly awoke to the fact that his feet, by some apparently independent action, had carried him down the street to the Dearwester cottage, at the door of which he was standing, hat in hand, asking for Miss Dearwester.

That evening Amy snuggled down on the broad



arm of Emerson's chair, and gave him a convulsive hug. She noted with a woman's protest a certain lack of the old transport in the kiss with which he responded. She respected Emerson, she admired him, she was devoted to him, but it was the attraction of the magnetic and compelling personality and person which had carried her away in spite of family objections. She could not endure the thought that the ecstatic bliss of the honeymoon could ever be less ecstatic, or that the thought of her should become less potent to inspire Emerson to quatrain and sonnet, than the week before the wedding.

"Now, I'm going to bother you," said she. "I'm going to muss up your papers, and read your outlines, and—everything!"

The changeful expression of the face, the dainty disdainful nose, the playfully pathetic little droop to the corners of the mouth, brought Emerson back from his cloud-land, and he returned her embrace with usury.

"Is that all?" he asked. "Do with it—with the whole 'plant'—as thou wilt."

"I'm going to hold you to that," said she. "And if I disapprove of anything, I'm going to change it. Matthew eighteenth, seventh: *Woe unto the world because of offences!* Is that the text? Oh, what a gloomy one! Why don't you preach us one of your happiest, most comforting, most artistic sermons? But maybe you can, you wonderful boy, even from this text. Tell me how you'll do it."

With the words "you wonderful boy" went a hug and a kiss which no man—except, perhaps, a reformer and a husband—could have been expected to resist.

With Emerson, however, the mental tract involved in resisting demands to change his course had become sore from pressure; he flinched internally at her remark, and her kiss fell upon unresponsive lips.

"I shall use the text," said he, "in an arraignment of the 'big business' of the country for its corruption of the national morals—for the lost souls dragged down by our commercial system."

"Aren't you afraid," asked Amy, "of becoming pessimistic?"

"No one is a pessimist," replied Emerson, "just because he sees the evil as it is and offers the remedy. The man who refuses to see the thing before his eyes, because it is evil, but insists upon looking on the good alone, is not an optimist, but a coward—don't you see that, dearest? The true optimist in sociology is the man with the diagnosis and the remedy, not he who denies the disease. Now, I'm going to make as pitiless a diagnosis as possible. I shall show that success now means commercial success alone; and that the captains of industry are as purely unmoral as was the old Italian despot. They are professional assassins of other men's business. They murder by the midnight dagger of attack upon his credit, the Thug's cord-and-ball of ruinous lawsuits, the slow poison of delayed and betrayed shipments, the bludgeon of railway rebates, the spring-gun of the stock and bond market. They bribe employees, buy secrets, and maintain spies. And as they carry on their careers, compared with which the life of an adder is saintly, they corrupt the sources of thought by endowing hospitals and libraries, and subsidizing the press."

"Don't say that," pleaded Amy. "You know Doctor Jones is just on the point of getting an endowment from Mr. Halliday."

"And if he does," returned Emerson, "what will he have done? Just floated bonds upon the economic policy of his teaching, that's all, and mortgaged his school's freedom to speak truth for a share in the loot of Halliday's thirty years of railway bucaneeering. He will be as truly a lost soul as Dives. He founded Tudor College to serve God; he will have erected in her halls an altar to Mammon. My best wish to him is that he fail. Education is too precious a thing to be tossed down to the masses by some great villain, as handsel to be scrambled for by boys and girls who should have it given freely by the State they are to serve as citizens. I blush to see a man like George Jones begging a share of Halliday's stealings!"

Amy sat still and unbending, all her warmth and ardor departed. Soon she rose, and took another chair. Emerson felt rebuked, and grew harder. He went on, however, without change of manner.

"'Plate sin with gold,  
'And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;  
'Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.'

"I'll cite the confessions of great men of affairs that they lie, break laws, bribe legislators, give and accept rebates, and commit all kinds of business murder, because they must do it to succeed. I'll show the horrible things taught to our young men under the maxim 'Business is business.'

"That the greatest scoundrels among these modern robber-barons are also the greatest philanthropists



Amy sat still and unbending. Page 156



and the most pious church-members, I shall mention to prove how the church itself has fallen. I shall speak of the books kept in the offices of such concerns as the oil trust, that show, I suppose, a black entry opposite my name on account of last Sunday's sermon, and where perhaps the most elaborate spy-system ever known has its records. I shall speak of the fear of these malignant growths, which runs through the business world, the educational world, the religious world, until a minister who preaches any reform outside a few with their 'O. K.' on them, or pays any attention to helping along the aspirations of organized working-men, takes his professional life in his hand. How can men—ordinary, weak men—be expected to become Christians, until these things are cured by making such fortunes impossible?"

Amy sat in rigid unresponsiveness, her class pride mortally offended, every precept of her rearing and education violated.

"I did not know," said she, "that the church owed any duty to labor disturbers or labor organizations."

"It owes it to every human being," said he, "to be sympathetic toward his aspirations and ambitions, as far as possible."

"I failed to observe," said she with a hard little laugh, "the sympathy in your arraignment of the 'robber-barons'."

"It lacked there, I suppose," confessed Emerson; "but that is only a matter of expression. The most piteous victims of our dreadful system are found at its bottom—and top. These great men are to blame, terribly to blame; but they are terribly sinned against, too. It's the system that's to blame, my dear. But

nothing can excuse their cruelty and rapacity; for they have hearts and minds. And then, I am not called upon to champion them, but only to avoid injustice to them: my gospel is as it was in the beginning, simply 'good tidings' to the poor."

"Do you think it practicable," asked Amy, "to build up and maintain a church, by catering to the mob, the agitators and disturbers, like those men who are making John so much trouble?"

"As a social club," answered Emerson, "it would be ruined. As a place for Christian work, it is the only thing worth while."

"Oh, I wish you wouldn't say such hard things," cried Amy.

"Dearest!" he exclaimed, embracing her. "I must say the truth, mustn't I? I love you, Amy! But I must speak the truth!"

"Then you mean to go on with these sermons?" asked she, slipping from his arms.

"I must!" he replied.

"I didn't marry a labor agitator!" she cried, her eyes flashing. "If you were going to do these things, why didn't you tell me! Why——" And as if afraid to stay longer, she ran away, leaving Emerson hurt, puzzled and angered, in the wretchedness of their first marital misunderstanding.

He could not see the justice of making marriage a strait-jacket for preserving habits and convictions and modes of conduct in the pre-nuptial state. He resented the implication that his soul was to be fettered. He had the peculiarity of the man who broods over the wrongs of the world—the great and universal wrongs: he was, perhaps, a little selfish in small things. So

he hardened toward Amy, and could see nothing but injustice and narrowness in the cry: "I didn't marry a labor agitator!"

This was one of the never-to-be-forgotten things which that first week of what he called his new apostolate called forth. Another was Doctor Jones' visit, which followed hard upon Mr. Bloodgood's mention of that gentleman to Mrs. Courtright. The good doctor found Emerson in his study, full of his topic for Sunday. He approached the subject-matter of his visit with unusual caution—for the doctor was ordinarily a direct and forthright man.

"I have read the works of Mr. George," said he after referring to Emerson's sermon, "and I look upon him as a great and good man—but not exactly a prophet, ha, ha, ha! And while I do not think his remedy the panacea he claims it to be for all our ills—"

"But he doesn't claim anything of the sort," interposed Emerson. "He only claims that it will eliminate involuntary poverty, and establish industrial freedom and justice. It won't make men Christians; but until they are economically free, nothing can make more than a few of them Christians."

"I am a much older clergyman than you," said Doctor Jones, "and have had my wrestle with these thoughts. If you go on, you will ruin your career."

"I can't suppress the truth," answered Emerson. "A church which conceals or fails to denounce the evils by which God is hidden from His children, is unchristian and antichristian. I want no career in it. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*"

Doctor Jones rose to go.



"I can't answer you," said he. "I can't say to you, 'Don't do it', but God bless you! I'd give anything for the privilege of standing up as you do. But I can't, I can't without ruining plans which go into the future far beyond my short life. And your doing it, even, in my town and my church, may blast my dearest hopes!"

This was on Thursday. On Friday came a letter from Doctor Bovee.

"I am glad to see," said he, *inter alia*, "that you are turning your attention to sociological themes. I should advise you to look more closely to the matter of getting yourself properly reported, as what the papers say we say is often of more consequence than our actual utterances. I can not believe that you have said what the press has attributed to you. . . . The truth is broad, and there are many phases of it which prove divisive if publicly stated. I am a good deal of a socialist myself, with proper limitations as to time and place, but I remember the example of our blessed Redeemer, in that *All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them* (Matt. xiii. 34). I do not regard the present time as propitious for the public utterance, by ministers of our faith, of more than an adumbration of many economic doctrines which may be essentially and abstractly indisputable. We should always bear in mind, as I have no doubt you always do and ever will, that our acceptance of a charge implies—a—I dislike the word contract, but (shall I say?) an obligation, under our vows as ministers, and our duties as men of business, merely to teach the truths which the church is organized to

promulgate. Let us thank God that they are so many and so precious!"

The letter closed with a fatherly message to Amy—which Emerson did not deliver. Their difference still subsisted. On Saturday, Judge Bloodgood came to see him, calm, placid, genial, fully himself. He was more suave and fatherly than he had ever shown himself to Emerson; and his manner, acquired on the bench, of carefully choosing words, as if every sentence was to endure for ever, and of his opening his mouth with deliberation and closing it as if in pursuance of some well-worked-out plan, made his every remark formidable. He discussed indifferent topics for a longer time than he had ever before vouchsafed to his son-in-law, and that in the kindly, companionable way which had won him popularity in the days when he desired it.

"Amy seems a little downcast, Emerson," said he at last. "I've been wondering if you haven't been making the mistake I so often have made, of planning my professional work as if I were the only one interested, and with insufficient thought as to the wife's feelings in the premises. You will pardon me, I know, for saying this, Emerson. 'Amy's happiness is about—about the most precious thing in the world—to her mother and me.'"

There were tears of genuine feeling in the judge's eyes, and a pathetic huskiness in his voice. The attack upon Emerson's position was from so unexpected a quarter that he had no reply ready, and the judge went on.

"You can see," he continued, "from the way things were disturbed by your last sermon, admirable as it

was in the sentiment by which the more discerning must see that it was inspired, that a continuation of this policy, on your part, must make you very unpopular with the solid and substantial people of the church and community. I recognize your right to utter what you believe to be true; but where there is so much difference of opinion and diversity of interest, ought you to wreck the church which you have been called to foster and build up, in your devotion to a debatable economic belief?"

"It is not debatable," answered Emerson. "That poverty comes from monopoly created by law, and mostly from land and highway monopoly, is as axiomatic as that the whole is equal to the sum of all its parts."

"Well, well, Emerson," answered the judge soothingly, "maybe that's so—we won't discuss it; and I'll only say that some of the axioms I used to believe in have grown doubtful to me as I get older: but how about wrecking Amy's happiness? Think of that, my boy. And so much of the noble and uplifting and beautiful and true outside this field of controversy. Come, Emerson, believe me; I'm an old man, and have seen much: the heart of the woman who loves you is worth more than any opinion in the world!"

For some time Emerson silently revolved in his mind this and the other things his father-in-law had said. For the first time, he wavered. Judge Bloodgood was so kind, so plausible, so dignified, so impressive, so the personification of the spirit of things as they are. And yet—and yet, there must be some defect in his reasoning.

"As for Amy's happiness," said he at last, "I am

sure she will be happier knowing me to be an honest man and a Christian, than if, to please her, I should make myself a sneak, a coward, and a Pharisee. We have had a little difference, a good deal of which is my fault, but I know it will come right if I pursue the right course. I can not believe that a wife's happiness can properly be conserved by her husband's being false to his fellow-men, and therefore false to himself and to his God—"

"Oh, now, Emerson!" began the judge, but Emerson stopped him.

"On one point," he went on, "you have changed my views, somewhat. The duty I owe to the church is a complex question. I believe I have the right to assume that robbery, adultery, perjury and murder, and the things in our economic system which produce them, are legitimate subjects for discussion in a Christian pulpit, and that the defense of God against the charge of being an accomplice, by creating a world in which poverty, vice and crime are parts of the scheme, is a minister's highest duty. But it seems to me now that even these truths ought not to be forced upon unwilling ears; and that a church which desires to be and remain unchristian should not be obliged to keep a pastor who violates his contract by following Jesus.—No, hear me out!—I have a duty and a responsibility. The one is to present my case—Jesus' case—to this church. The other is, having presented it, to let the church say what it wants. I shall finish my series of sermons, and, at its close, I shall have a ballot taken on the question of my resigning or staying. And I shall abide by the result of the vote!"

"Won't you hear further argument on this?" urged the judge, falling into court-room parlance. "This will be ruinous, Emerson, ruinous!"

"I am resolved," answered Emerson. "I am willing, I shall be glad to hear all you may wish to say: but nothing can change me."

The judge sat silent for a long time. He had come resolved to keep his temper and preserve his composure; and he was afraid to continue the conversation for fear of breaking these resolutions. Finally he rose and went away without a word. When Emerson had watched him pass out into the street, he went to Amy, took her in his arms, begged her pardon, and they were reconciled. The interrupted current of their affection seemed to flow on as before.

Judge Bloodgood went to his son's office and reported.

"It's a serious situation," said he. "I don't know how to handle it."

"I know what I shall do," cried John. "He'll not shoot at me and my business and my life's work from behind my sister's skirts. By God, I'll fight him as I would an Apache! And I'll see that he doesn't drag my sister through a life of shame and failure and disgrace, either!"

"Be calm, John," urged the judge. "He's Amy's husband, you know; we mustn't forget that. And if you get into a passion, you'll weaken our case in some way. Be calm, and let's see how he can be turned back to a sane course."

"I don't want him turned back, I tell you, father!" retorted John. "Let him go to hell! He doesn't need to be Amy's husband for ever. The sooner he's

put where he belongs—where she can't care for him any more, the better for her—the better for the whole family!"

He pushed hard at the buzzer of the telephone.

"O'Neill," said he through the transmitter, to his chief clerk, "send Mr. Feek to me, at once!"

"I've heard something of this precious brother-in-law of mine," said he; and stopped as he saw that his father was gone.

The elder man's instincts had told him that when Feek was called for, the work in hand was unfitted for the immaculate touch of a United States judge. As for Jack himself, he felt a savage joy in the abandonment of the policy of compromise and conciliation. Suddenly the consciousness grew upon him of how he hated Emerson Courtright. He did not seek to analyze the feeling; he simply let it possess him. Perhaps the mere fact of Emerson's setting himself in opposition to the great "interests" was enough. It was an enormity like the bearding of a lord by his footman. And mingled with it was an unreasoned sense of enmity, as if Emerson stood between him and some dearly desired personal happiness. This, however, was back in those mental crypts of which a man does not allow himself to think—of which he often denies the existence, even. What Bloodgood thought of was Emerson's relations with the A. R. U., and those sermons. His feelings were quite another matter.

## CHAPTER XIV

### AN IRRUPTION OF BARBARIANS

"The Split in the First Church Widens! Pastor Courtright Throws Down the Gauntlet to His Opponents in a Referendum. Eloquent Excoriation of Modern 'Big Business.' Dramatic Scene at Close. Fists are Shaken and Epithets Exchanged."

To such effect were the head-lines in the *Lattimore Herald* on the morning after the delivery of the second sermon of Emerson's new series. The church had been crammed; the sermon was in Mr. Courtright's best style of pulpit oratory. One gets an exaggerated idea of what took place, however, from the story of Mr. Giddings' reporter; though it was dramatic when, at the close of the sermon, Emerson announced his "referendum."

"I shall finish this series of sermons," said he. "I shall state the case of Jesus as against that of the Mammon of unrighteousness we have set up here in this place. I shall give this church the chance to choose. Every church in the land—in all lands—will soon come to the same choice; for the new Reformation is coming in a mighty struggle to state the law of Christ in terms of economics. The Lexington and Concord of this blessed Revolution may be fought in this very church. If you will only open your minds and hearts to the truth, that it may make you free—free from the poverty that embrutes, free

from the wealth that corrupts, free from the greed that comes from fear—I shall be satisfied with the result!”

“We’ll give him a result to be satisfied with,” said Kittrick, the roadmaster, as he walked out. “He’ll be snowed under so deep he never’ll get out!”

“He will, eh?” said a little sallow man whose fingers bore the stain of cigar-making. “Somebody’s pullin’ the strings on you, and you’re dancin’ for a promotion! We’ll show *you*, you jumpin’-jack, that the preacher’s got some friends—”

“Don’t you say that to me!” snarled Kittrick, shaking his finger before the cigar-maker’s eyes. “Don’t—”

Now these were not the ordinary subdued and repressed expressions thought fit for the house of God. These men were stirred deeply, by something vitally affecting their lives, not in the next world, but here and now; and Morgan Yeager, who knew the cigar-maker, heard their voices, and understood the danger of the situation.

“Come on, Simpson!” whispered he, as he pushed in between them. “Are you crazy? This is the worst thing you can do!”

All this was rather extraordinary in the vestibule of an aristocratic church; but the voices were low and the gestures slight, and few people noticed it. It foreshadowed a strange episode in church history, however. The old membership fell away from Emerson almost in a body. As the sermons went on, Sunday after Sunday, the respectable, substantial, conservative and wealthy aligned themselves against him, withheld their contributions and mostly stayed



away from the services—things to be expected, perhaps, in a modern church. Yet, the church was filled. Laborers, mechanics, railway and factory employees took possession of the vacant pews, and as the young minister held up to them the picture of a regenerated society based on the tenderest messages of Jesus, rough men whose club and church had been the saloon, and whose knowledge of the sacred name had come through the oaths with which they were all too familiar, sat looking at him with eyes suffused with tears, not knowing that they wept.

For many years the question of how to bring the working-man to the church had puzzled the good people of the congregation. Mr. Courtright had solved it; and the good people bitterly resented the solution. These strange faces of shabby men and dowdy women were as revolting as the new and disturbing doctrines which brought them there—like Huns or Vandals in an Italian cathedral.

Emerson's only comfort in this time of strife and suffering was that "the common people heard him gladly." But not many of the common people were on the church rolls, so as to be able to vote on the day of that last sermon. Morgan, his old taste for politics reviving, acting with some of the inconspicuous members who adhered to Emerson, had made a secret poll of the church, and found it two to one against the pastor. The next Sunday, several working-men requested admission to membership, and were received; and on the next, so many came that the *Herald* gave it a column write-up with interviews.

Mr. Dewey, the elder, said that it was a transparent effort to use ward caucus methods to pack the church

for Courtright and anarchy; to steal the church property built up by one congregation for the benefit of another, and for one, he would not submit to it. When asked what he thought of doing about it, he spoke of legal proceedings.


Mr. Lattimore deprecated the doings of the Court-right faction, "if they were as reported," but knew nothing of legal proceedings. He would be likely to know if legal steps were to be taken.

Mr. Simpson, the cigar-maker, said to the *Herald* man that, in days gone by, when Mr. Courtright had been gaining new members much faster than now, but from the privileged and comfortable classes, every one had rejoiced. He as one of the new members had obtained from Mr. Courtright's sermons a great new light on the nature of Jesus and His teachings, and wanted to sit under and support him. Others felt the same. The Federation of Labor and the A. R. U. had taken no action. Neither had the Cigar-Makers' Union. The question was insulting to organized labor; and the whole thing threw a flood of light on the churchianity of the day, that wants the working-man in the church on a basis of inferiority to the high-toned ruling members, but kicks like a bay steer when he comes in and sets up as their equal. Thus Mr. Simpson, who was very much in earnest, but whose language is in need of revision.

If there was any "conspiracy to pack the church," Emerson was ignorant of it. He was in a state of enormous mental activity, alternately caught up to the heights in his vision of a redeemed world—a realm of equality, fraternity, coöperation and plenty—and plunged into the depths by the inconceivable blindness,

deafness, unfaith and hardness of heart of the people he so loved. How could they treat him so, he thought, they whose tears had so often flowed at his descriptions of the imaginary grief of God at their sins, now sneering with dry eyes at his mention of the almost unendurable wrongs and "immedicable woes" of their fellow-men? So tender of God's feelings, of which they could know nothing; so callous of man's misery, which they must shut their eyes not to see! How could they, with unshaken hearts, hear what he now said! How could they conceive of any but pure motives on his part? How could they fail to see how much better for them—even those living from the most unadulterated and indefensible monopoly—it would be, to have lifted above want the great festering mass of submerged humanity? How could they—how could they! Surely, next Sunday he would find a way to reach their hearts! While he so agonized and strove, he was incapable of any such "conspiracy" as that of which he was accused.

That organized effort was put forth to secure a majority of votes in the church, goes without saying. Morgan Yeager, now a man of mark in labor circles, had something to do with it, and men like Overmeyer, Hicks, Strang and Simpson much more. Among the unskilled, with whom Morgan's lot had at first been cast, little interest was manifest in this "fight among the big-bugs." The railway employees and skilled artisans, however, were of a more enterprising character and nearer to the church in class, and their strong unions made them more independent of the opinions of their employers. From these industrious and respectable classes, with a sprinkling of obscure



doctors and lawyers, came the recruits—to the intense anger of John Bloodgood, who would have discharged every one of his men concerned in the matter, had he not been afraid of the “American Railway Union”—the “A. R. U.”—then a crescent portent in the railway sky.

“What gits me,” said Overmeyer, at one of their conferences, “is what the other side is doing.”

“Maybe they’re going to pass the whole thing up,” said Simpson.

“Not any!” ejaculated Hicks; “not and miss out on church property worth a hundred thousand dollars, and lose to a lot of rough-necks like us. They’re up to some devilment, you can bet. Vol Feek ain’t trotting from the Old Man to Dewey and back as he does for nothing. But what is it?”

It is shocking to think of such words, or their justification, growing from things related to Christianity, even historically. Yet, so far have our churches strayed from the path followed when they “had all things in common, and none wanted,” that church controversies differ in no substantial way from those of ward politics, for instance. And to know whether Mr. Hicks’ fear of “devilment” was well or ill founded they had not long to wait.

It was Olive Dearwester to whom the terrible news first came—the incredible news of the mine dug by Emerson’s mock-Christian foes, and even now ready to be sprung.

She had been to a choir-meeting one night, and was going home alone, depressed by the deepening gloom of the situation. The choir was about to disband. Funds were no longer available for its support. Mr.

Dewey had informed her that contributions had fallen off so unexpectedly that the music could no longer be paid for. So she had set about it to make up a volunteer choir for the next Sunday—and the crude voices, the lack of musicianliness in the songs rehearsed, had set her artist's nerves on edge. Doctor Jones had said to her that day, that, owing to their disappointment in failing to receive the Halliday endowment—suspended while Mr. Halliday's secretaries investigated the question as to whether the social and church atmosphere of Lattimore was suitable for a college—they would be obliged to dispense with her services, after the first of the year. Her wealthy pupils had most of them left her, beginning to drop off soon after her singing of the *Marseillaise* at one of Mr. Courtright's labor meetings. She was suffering for her adhesion to the party of Emerson. Her rent would soon be due. Things began to pinch. It was apparent that Amy was not the only woman to be caught in the wreckage.

A tall figure overtook her, passed on, and then paused. It was John Bloodgood, hat in hand. He was becoming more open in his attentions, more insistent in their advances. He seemed to care nothing about her friendship for Emerson, and, in fact, impressed her as being quite brotherly himself toward him. He fell into step beside her, and, in his masterful way, to which she felt a sense of comfort in yielding, he took her arm. They walked in silence, almost, until they reached her gate.

"I can't ask you in," said she, "it's so late!"

A woman came up to the gate—a woman who, even in the darkness, could be seen to be rotund of form,

and dressed without reference to concealing the fact. She hesitated a moment, and passed on.

"Well," he answered, "I must go if I must. But I hate to do it."

"A terrible affliction!" she said, laughing; "and prepare yourself for another. After the present month, we can't maintain our very pleasant relations as landlord and tenant. Mother and I shall be obliged to move."

"May I ask why?" he inquired.

"Surely, you may," she replied. "We can't afford to keep the cottage. Times are a little hard with us; but we can do very nicely in some rooms I have in mind, and I shall go to my pupils' homes—what pupils I have left."

Mr. Bloodgood laid his hand upon hers, as it rested on the gate.

"Miss Dearwester—Olive—" he said, and not even his father ever spoke more plausibly, "don't do this. Your hard times are only temporary: and you must keep up appearances, you know. Soon you will want the cottage back, and may not be able to get it. Don't think of the rent. We would rather have you in the house, rent free, than almost any one else on any basis. You have done a good deal for me—more than you know. Let me do something for you—I hope sometime to do much, much more."

Olive stood with her hand under his on the gate, when the same stout, commonly-dressed woman again came by, again paused, again passed on. Mr. Bloodgood removed his hand.

"I wonder what she's haunting this place for!" he said.

Olive paid no attention to the woman. She was in the inward flutter of the girl whose lover has gone to the verge of the proposal. The Bloodgood tide was running in very strongly that evening. Life's balance-sheet showed so clearly the one asset that she possessed—herself; and these words of his to her innocent mind pointed so plainly to its market and price—position, wealth, and, best of all, *security* for herself and her mother.

He lifted her hand and kissed it: then, as she submitted to this so passively, he stooped and kissed her lips.

"Think over what I have said," he pleaded.

"I will," said she, the wondrous voice a little unsteady; "and I thank you, so much! Good night, Mr. Bloodgood."

John Bloodgood went down the street, his eyes shining, his shoulders thrown back, his breath coming in great drafts of exultation. He was dizzy with the intoxication of the remembrance of the firm warm arm in his hand, the soft moist lips on his.

"She's mine!" he thought with swelling heart. "She's mine! I must have Mildred put off the announcement of our engagement for a while, and I'll win her. To-night marks the turn of the tide! And after Feek's work materializes, she must come to me—she must: she'll have nowhere else to go!"

Olive walked into her cottage, finding all still. Her mother had retired. The girl was moving quietly about in the abstracted way of one who, in a state of absorption, does the things of habit, when she heard a tap at the hall door—the gentle tap of one unused to halls, and unacquainted with bells. Olive

opened the door and knew the woman standing there as the one she had seen hovering about the gate.

"Is this Missis Dearwester?" she asked.

"No," Olive answered, "Mrs. Dearwester is in bed. I'm Miss Dearwester."

"Kin I come in?"

"Certainly," said Olive, to whom her western nurture left but one reply. "Please be seated."

"Miss or Missis," said the woman, "if it makes anny difference, I'm thinkin' ye're the singer. An' ye're the wan I thought I wanted to see."

"You thought?" repeated Olive. "What do you mean?"

"I mane this," said the woman; "if ye're a good gurrl, as ye look, I've got that t' tell ye that ye might well count the ties from wan ind of the division to the other t' hear—if it's bad news ye like. But if ye're as close to yon man at the gate as things I seen jist now might show, thin the more advertisin' ye git the betther f'r thrade. I dunno' whether t' tell ye, 'r save me brith to cool me broth."

Olive cheeks flamed scarlet.

"If you mean well by me," said she with an intensity that made the woman shrink back, "prove it by holding me as good as yourself. I am responsible to no one for what I do, but to God, and my mother in there. If you've anything to say which I as a good girl ought to know, say it. If not—"

"Hush, darlin'! Forgive me," said the woman. "I see how it is.—An' how can I say it to y'r dear sweet face? But, as ye love y'r good name, listen!"



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE FLEDGLING TAKES WING

"As ye love y'r good name, listen!"

Olive's hand went to her heart to still the throbs which threatened to stifle her. The strange woman leaned forward, her red hands on her short knees, her freckled, fat face full of the sympathy of one of that race of women to whom good name is the chief jewel in the ring of virtue, and of that station in life wherein it lies alone in a casket, otherwise empty. Coarse and uncouth as she was, she knew why the girl, with the stately form and the deep, deep eyes, grew so faint and pale at her words.

"Who are you?" gasped Olive; "and what do you mean?"

"Listen!" said the woman, with the gift for the dramatic of which she had had no education to deprive her. "Me name is Mary O'Malley, but I married Tim Burns. The O'Malleys was always betther off than the Burnses; but what's a poor gurrl to do in the likes o' this country! Ye prob'ly noticed my Tim, a big two-fishted divvle wid a goolden mustash—ye couldn't fail to notice Tim—"

"Where? When?" Olive interjected. "Tell me what you have to tell!"

"The day bad luck kim t'ye," whispered Mrs. Burns. "Ye moind the special that was shtalled two nights betune here an' Angus Falls? My Tim was the con!"

The special train? The day bad luck came to her? As you value your good name? What was there in thirty-six hours' delay on a washed-out track to justify this woman's tragical way of saying "bad luck"?

"An' the brakeman—ye likely wouldn't see him—was that little black far-down John James Finneran. An' the hell's work kim up like this. Feek goes from that tall Protestant son o' Satan—savin' y'r prisence, ma'am—that you should niver shtand at the gate wid ag'in—me makin' bould to say it—Feek, ol' snake-in-the-grass Feek, that's ch'ated manny a poor woman out o' th' damages that's her due, whiles her man, 'r her bye, lays in th' coffin in the other room, wid the holy candles burnin' over him, cut to mince-meat 'r boiled 'r roasted to shreds in a wreck—the back of ivery good woman's hand to him for iver! You know th' crawlin' serpint?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" cried Olive. "Go on!"

"Yes, go on!" said a voice from the inner door. "If you've got anything to say that affects my girl's good name, go on and get through before everything happens that ever will!"

Mrs. Burns turned, bridling, to Mrs. Dearwester, who had come to the sound of their voices.

"An' who might *you* be?" she asked.

"I'm this girl's mother," answered Mrs. Dearwester.

"Oho!" crooned Mrs. Burns. "An' she wid such a civil tongue in her head! Ye niver can tell about thim shports an' throwbacks, can ye!" And then, turning to Olive, she went on, giving Mrs. Dearwester no time, had she desired, to make reply: "As I was tellin' ye, this thing Bloodgood—much good blood he's got, nit!—was sendin' ol' Feek quizzin' an' fly-

coppin' around to get whispers about what tuk place in the special caar thim two nights, afther Mr. Court-right—may God deliver him from his inemies an' f'rgive him his heresies f'r a good friend o' th' lab'rin' man—got all the knives of the brass-collars out f'r him by sayin' a word now an' thin f'r the poor. An' the Old Man, his brother-in-law—yon man at the gate—thryin' to murther his carrackter an' lose him his job, an' take away your good name, to bate him in a church fight!"

A deadly chill went to Olive's heart, as some first glimmerings of comprehension of the shameful truth dawned upon her reeling mind. Her mother's arm went round her with a firm and comforting embrace.

"I don't doubt your words," said Mrs. Dearwester; "but there must be some mistake. I've always despised Bloodgood—"

"Right you arre, ma'am," answered Mrs. Burns, "an' a good enough Christian I hope t' forgive the bitther tongue of a hot-tempered O'Malley."

"I talk plain myself, once in a while," replied Mrs. Dearwester. "But this Bloodgood matter— He's always been friendly to us. How do you know that his fight on Emerson Courtright takes in this girl of mine—or that anything of the kind you believe is being cooked up?"

"Oh, d'ye think I'd risk Tim's job be comin' here, if I didn't know? Feek comes t' Tim an axes him what busted the naygur's head; an' all about ivery hour of both thim black, black nights. Tim, not bein' paid to remimber annythin' but orders, remimbers nothin'. But says he to me, 'What d'ye s'pose the son-of-a-gun'—savin' y'r prisence—'wants to know about the doin's

on the caar? It was shtalled, an' that's all they was of it. Anny damn fool of a claim agent orto know that much!' An' then I axed him all about everything 's if I'd been a fly-cop mesilf. Finely, says I, 'Name ivery wan on that caar thim two nights.' Says he, 'First, there was the pretty singer that give me the flowers. Her arrums was full of 'em, an' it looked like the roses was put out to be the purty face o' her, an' she says to me, givin' me a bokay—' 'Arrah!' says I, 'her name's down. Give me the next. Nobody's got annything to frame up ag'in her.' "

"I remember giving him the flowers," said Olive. "He looked like a good man."

"He'll do," assented Mrs. Burns. "'An',' says he, 'there was her an' the preacher, Misther Courtright.' 'The wan,' says I, 'that's jumped on to the thaves o' th' world?' 'Yis,' says Tim, 'good luck to him!' 'He's the wan old Feek's afther,' says I; 'who ilse?' 'No wan,' says Tim; 'at laste no wan but Speck Toombs, the naygur.' Thin says I, 'Tim, the man that preaches ag'in the landlords must be hilped by the O'Malleys an' Burnses. Find out what he got from the others.' 'I'll lose me job!' says he; 'an Finneran'll get me run.' 'Whin y'r gran'father was hung f'r carryin' a pike an' shtickin' it into folk like thim Mr. Courtright's fightin', he niver thought of his job,' says I. 'That he didn't,' says Tim. 'I'll go down an' hunt up Speck Toombs,' says he, which he did, an' axin' y'r pardon f'r a vulgar word, he trun a few drinks into his yaller hide, an' finds that Speck Toombs has made a affidavit that I can't say t'ye what's in it, so help me God, it's so vile!"

"Go on, Mrs. Burns," said Mrs. Dearwester. "Noth-

ing that's necessary to be said is too vile for me to hear or you to say. What has that animal sworn to?"

"Ye can guess," answered Mrs. Burns, "whin I tell ye that it tells o' two voices all night long in the same room o' the caar, an' of Speck bein' beat up, whin he objected, be the preacher, an' locked in the smokin'-room; an' bein' paid money an' his docther's bills settled be Mr. Courtright, to kape it dark. Oh, ye can guess, ye can guess! An' this is the iniquity an' mortal sin folks come to be fallin' away from the thrue church an' settin' up others an' callin' 'em Christian—not that I mane youse, ma'am. An' Finneran tould Tim that Doc Aylesbury has got a paper signed by Mr. Courtright, promisin' to pay f'r mendin' the naygur's head; an' they're whisperin' it about where Feek's been that he was too frindly wid ye befure ayther of ye kim to Lattimore, an' brought ye here, an' got ye into his boardin'-house, an' into th' singin' choir, an' comes too often to y'r house—an' may the lyin' tongues o' thim wither to the roots, an' drop from their black mouths, that would do such a thing ag'in a poor gurrl! An' now, forewarned is forearrumed; an' I must go. Don't say annything to hilp that black dog Finneran t' git Tim's run from him.. I cuddn't schlappe till I kim t'ye. If I've done no good, I've done no harrum, unliiss maybe t' mesilf, an' good night t'ye!"

She was gone, with scanty thanks, leaving the mother and daughter so stricken by the bolt that they scarcely returned her parting salutation. Not being of the demonstrative sort, they sat long, the mother's arms about the daughter, her hand stroking the black hair tremblingly. Olive stared straight before her, her eyes dilated as if with terror.

"Ma," she whispered at last. "Ma, it can't be true. The worst man in the world wouldn't do such a thing. I can't believe it."

"That woman never made it up, dolly," said her mother. "She couldn't and she wouldn't. It's true; and you're trapped, like a dove in a net."

Pale as one in death Olive sat; but at last her face flamed crimson. She buried her face in her mother's lap, her breath came in long quivering sighs. The elder woman, sometimes with flashing eyes and set teeth, sometimes with soft and yearning pity, brooded over her like an eagle over her wounded young. At last Olive sat erect, her face pale again.

"Do you believe," she asked, "that people who don't think as Mr. Courtright does would stoop to so black a plot—could such people be found in—in a church?"

"I was reading before you came in," said her mother, "a text that says, *They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service to God.* That struck me, somehow, while I was reading it. I guess the American church-members of to-day are as much up to slander in their God's cause as the pious people of Judea were to murder in the old days. They've done it, Ollie; we may as well make up our minds to it."

"They don't know me so very well," said Olive, speaking again; "not many of the people; but they surely wouldn't believe such—such a thing—of Emerson!"

"Oh, baby, baby!" replied Mrs. Dearwester. "They'll jump to believe it. The ones that deny it will half believe it. They'll find excuses that'll damn

you both, and point you out, and laugh, and leer, and——”

“Don’t, ma, don’t!” cried Olive; and her face went down in her mother’s lap again.

“It will ruin him,” Olive said presently; “it will utterly ruin him!”

“Ruin him!” exclaimed her mother. “Ruin *him*! Do you mean to say, young one, that you’re thinking about him at such a time? He’s ruined, anyhow. Any patch of woods he hides in will have a tree high enough to hang him on; but what about you? Oh, Ollie, Ollie, when we were just getting the start we’ve been working so long, so long, for, to have to crawl off into some hole, poisoned like this, to die! And all because some soft-headed preacher——”

“Hush!” cried Olive. “Don’t say that! Do you know, ma, I’m almost proud to go down with him, if he must go down! Do you think I could stay here and meet these harpies, and sing my songs to them and teach their children—but the children are sweet—after they had cast him out? No! We’ll leave, mommie, but we won’t crawl off to die, poisoned. Put on your wraps, and come with me, dear.”

With scarce a word, Mrs. Dearwester complied. They went down the long street to the new opera house, where those who fought with Ormuzd and those who fought with Ahriman were gathered in a three-hours’ truce to see the play.

“Stay in the lobby, mommie,” said Olive. “I want to ask the man at the box-office for an address.”

“Good evening, Miss Dearwester,” said he. “Come to see the last act? It’s almost over. I can give you two seats in——”

"No," said Olive. "I am not going in. I want you to find out for me, if you can, and will be so kind, where the Athenians play to-night."

The young man rummaged among piled-up theatrical papers.

"They're somewhere in the south, now," said he. "Pshaw! I thought I could—Oh, here it is! Houston, Texas, to-night. I'll give you the paper. There's their schedule for a week. Don't mention it; you're quite welcome. Good night!"

Olive took her mother's arm and walked resolutely to the telegraph office; took a pad of forms, and in the deafening tempest of sounders, she wrote and tore up, until at last she handed a message to the clerk, and asked the tariff on it to Houston, Texas.

"Olive," said her mother, "don't you do anything rash. Let me see that!"

Olive gave her the message.

"Duncan McAndrew," it read, "Athenians Opera Company, Houston, Texas. If position offered me is still open, I will accept. Wire answer and instructions. Olive Dearwester."

Mrs. Dearwester's expression changed.

"Don't send that," said she, "until morning. We must talk it over."

"No, ma," replied Olive, looking her mother steadily in the face. "I'm in command now. Send this as quick as you can; and, if an answer comes, deliver it at once, day or night, to this address."

Out in the street, once more among the people disgorged by the opera house, dressed in their handsome gowns and black suits, chatting and smiling and nodding to one another, went this sorely beset mother



and daughter. Olive was in command, as she had said, her mother following submissively.

"Do you know Morgan Yeager's address, ma?" asked Olive. "Please give it to me: I want to send him a message to come to us in the morning. We can't tell this to Mr. Courtright—Morgan is the only human being to whom we can say a word of it, and we must leave the matter in his hands. You must tell him what happened in the car, and all that good woman told us. Here we are at home—and now I must pack up. You lie down, mommie, and sleep, if you can."

"Olive," said her mother, "I can't allow this. I forbid it. You can't go away into the associations of a life on the stage!"

"I may not get the chance," replied Olive; "and if I don't, I may be able to get another position somewhere, among 'Christian' surroundings, like the First Church!"

Mrs. Dearwester, unable, in her bitterness, to see any fallacy in this bitter reply, held her peace. Olive went on with her packing.

"You see, mommie," said she, "they will surely strike Emerson next week. My going away, as if to desert him, will take something from the force of the blow—I can see that clearly. After it came, we couldn't go—it would seem like a confession: and we can't stay. It's impossible. If I go—go south—you can go back to Aunt Nell's at Madison."

"Not me!" said Mrs. Dearwester. "I'll make my own plans."

"Don't be cross, mommie," coaxed Olive, kissing her. "Don't! It breaks my heart!"

And from playfulness, she burst into tears, crying copiously into the trunkful of dresses, and then wiping the tear-stains away with a sponge.

With daylight Morgan came, bade Olive a calm good morning as, on the few occasions of their meeting, had been his wont, and was closeted with Mrs. Dearwester for an hour.

"You're doing the only right thing," said he to Olive, on emerging from the conference. "What this woman told you gives me the knowledge I have wanted. I knew they must be doing something like this: they had to. Our side, on a vote, can now count more hands than theirs. I never saw so bitter a contest, in political life or anywhere else. They conscientiously think we are stealing the church—organization and property—to make a nest of anarchy and wickedness of it—as conscientiously as Emerson believes that he will make it an outpost of the Kingdom of Heaven. They probably believe this story—or will when they hear it. No body of people ever go out deliberately to commit such a crime as this, feeling it to be a crime. These gray-haired old bankers and judges and merchants can't see things the way we do—no matter how true our ideas may be—they *can't*; any more than we can see the infra-red and ultra-violet rays in light. It's the old blind struggle in the darkness, 'twixt old systems and the Word. Emerson has made a projectile of himself, and gone crashing into the walls of plutocracy. The walls resist, and there are shock and burning heat—and the projectile suffers whether it pierces the fortification or not. Something like this is plutocracy's way of defeating him, and it goes about it with cunning and craft,

doing evil, so far as it can see that it is evil, that good may come—their kind of good, mind. But the thing for you to do is to go, before the fuse burns down.”

“Can’t you stop it, somehow?” asked Olive. “Oh! I thought you might, Morgan!”

“No,” said he. “Nothing can stop it.—There’s a telegraph boy coming up the walk.”

Olive’s hands were steady as she opened the envelope; but her mother’s trembled.

“Sure. Position is open. Join company at St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans. Get transportation of manager Carnish Opera House, Lattimore. Good girl! Good luck!

“MCANDREW.”

“The train goes at three,” said Olive. “My packing is done!”

“Mine’s not,” said her mother. “I think I’ll shine in opera! Anyhow, where you go, I go.”

“Oh, mommie, mommie!” cried Olive, joyously hugging her, “of course you’ll go! I don’t know how we shall manage it; but somehow we will, you darling, you! And now, Morgan, to breakfast; and then you must help us to get things—all our affairs—adjusted. And we’ll pack for mommie; and then, ma—I can’t run off like a traitor and a coward, and let him think, after all his goodness to me, that I’m as bad as the rest; and he depending on me for the music and everything—I’m going to see Emerson before I go!”

## CHAPTER XVI

### BEHIND THE HOLLOW MASK

One of Emerson Courtright's new "crazy ideas" was that our dwellings and workshops reflect our spiritual life; that the rolling-mill, the furnace-room and the abattoir are the natural and visible bodyings forth of the crushing and grinding of competition, the hell of the labor-market, the brutality of the labor-shambles, spouting blood by a million conduits. Like all symbols—the function of which is only to lead toward truth, not to it—these correspondences of the inward with the outward must be accepted (putting it mildly) with reservations; but, anyhow, his own workshop bore out his theory, as he sat in it the day Olive Dearwester made her parting call on her old and dear friend.

It was no longer the elegant apartment into which she came on her first visit. The rich rugs were soiled to a uniform gray by muddy boots; the *Compendium of Theology* and works on homiletics were buried in a mass of economic books and propagandists' tracts; the denominational papers were lying in their unbroken wrappers; and scattered over the desk were copies of badly printed sheets, got out with difficulty in obscure dens scattered over the world, by the Garisons of a new abolition crusade. Over all were dust and the scent of tobacco smoke. One knew at

once that it had become a room where men of all sorts met and brought their habits with them.

To Amy the place and its frequenters were disgusting, and she never came any more. This was another of the evidences of the barrier which had now come between her and her husband. She was punctilious in her discharge of all wifely duties—more so, perhaps, than ever; but their lives now were like two overlapping domains: there was a restricted area of common ground occupied as of old; but on each side an extending hinterland of forbidden fields, where one ruled alone and the other never trespassed. Amy felt every fiber of her old life, her schooling, her family atmosphere, drawing her away from her husband's new work; and there was in Emerson an intellectual or spiritual pride, not unmingled with its perverseness, which would not let him stoop to plead or cajole or woo for this higher companionship, which, he thought with more or less reason, must come of itself or not at all. Amy suffered most, perhaps: for he had a world to love and save, she only her own home and her own life.

Simpson, the cigar-maker, sat across from Emerson, talking volubly, almost excitedly. He was smoking a black cigar, and on his breath was the smell of alcohol. Most of Emerson's new followers were of the sober and respectable sort. Simpson's habits were objectionable, but he was trying to be a true disciple of what some called the "New Light."

"I tell you, Mr. Courtright," said he, "I'm proud of the way the laboring people have hung together in this thing. It means a whole lot to us who've been most active; for the laboring man hates a loser, and

we stood to lose, until the past week. But now we've got a lead-pipe cinch on controlling the vote. Yeager and I went over the lists last night."

"I shall be defeated, anyhow," said Emerson, sighing. "My dream of making this church a temple of peace and brotherhood, with a pulpit from which I could preach freedom for all men, supported and encouraged by my people—my old congregation—is over. I have no joy in this victory, Simpson, much as I appreciate what you and the rest of the friends have done."

"We thought you'd feel pretty good over it," said Simpson.

"I could take you all in my arms for gratitude!" cried Emerson. "I feel as though I had discovered a new and great race, in the people whom I had never noticed, all about me—as if I had found that the stones and cinders and slag under my feet had all the time been precious ore. But see the ones I've lost! And the ones I thought would see the truth—how they hate me! And, from their viewpoint, with what good reason they hate me!"

"Yes," said Simpson, "you've been shootin' it into the silk-stockings; but we've got 'em coopered now, Mr. Courtright."

"But even so," responded Emerson, "don't we succeed by a sort of appeal to force?"

"Well," responded Simpson reflectively, "I don't know but what we do, puttin' it that way. But any time you organize a church, or anything else, you arrange for things of this kind. The church takes in new members on a basis of equality—just like the union—you understand; and the longest pole knocks

the persimmons—majority rules. If you can't enforce your rule, where are you at?

"O' course," went on Simpson, as Emerson remained silent, "this church business is a new game to me, an' to most of the boys. I always thought a Christian was a feller that thought he was better than I was, and hated cuss-words and theaters and base-ball and beer more than he loved any one; and offered me a corner lot in Heaven if I'd only give him or some other church-member a quit-claim deed to my share of the earth. Now, we've got a new definition of it: we know we ain't good Christians, as you describe 'em; but, Lord, think of us bein' Christians at all! And it ain't that a Christian is any lower than we thought, or we much nearer to bein' right, that we come to you. You don't make Christianity any easier, but harder, really, to reach to. But the thing is this way: there's hope in it, the way you put it. The old kind is no good, as I see it, if everybody fell in, judgin' by the ones in now. Folks would stop swearing; an' that would be a good thing. They'd quit boozing—in public—and most of 'em in private, maybe; an' that would be better yet. (I'm about quit; but I had to drink with a friend before I came in.) But aft' they'd quit all these vices, if they gouged in mon— matters, and cut down wages, and played the game of business as church-members do now, where'd be the Christianity? But, as you put it, Christianity a higher degree in what we union men have already been initiated into—bad as the unions are from our way of lookin' at 'em. Brotherly love, coöperation, equality of opportunity, freedom, doing as you'd be done by, an' changin' the laws so as to make these

things possible. Why, to poor men, these very words sound like Heaven!"

"They mean that," said Emerson. "When the Kingdom of Heaven was preached, it meant nothing but that."

"Well," said Simpson, "just get that before the people right, an' you couldn't kill men as fast as they'd be willing to die for it!"

He went out, and Emerson, after thinking for a while of the striking utterance with which the man had departed, turned to the book he had been reading. He found a passage so absorbing in interest, that Olive and her mother had stepped in through the open door, before he knew it.

"Oh, Mrs. Dearwester!" cried he, "and Olive! How good of you to come in! Listen to this, Olive, from *Sartor Resartus*—Carlyle has so many new meanings on re-reading! '*Meanwhile, in our era of the World*', he says, '*those same Church-Clothes have gone sorrowfully out-at-elbows: nay, far worse, many of them have become mere hollow Shapes, or Masks, under which no living Figure or Spirit any longer dwells*'; and now listen to this! '*but only spiders and unclean beetles, in horrid accumulation, drive their trade; and the mask still glares on you with its glass-eyes, in ghastly affectation of Life,—some generation-and-half after Religion has quite withdrawn from it*'—I had read that for the first time, really—we never actually read anything until we understand—and I was thinking of what a ghastly mask the First Church has become, when in came Charley Simpson, the cigar-maker, and he showed me what the rest of it means:—'*after Religion has quite withdrawn from it, and in*



*unnoticed nooks is weaving for herself new Vestures, wherewith to reappear, and bless us, or our sons or grandsons.*’ No nook more unnoticed, surely, than that of Charley and his ‘gang,’ as he calls them, with their tobacco-saturated systems, and their proneness to drink; but I was quite touched, just now, by the generous enthusiasm of the man for pure altruism; it moved me. Grand fellow, if he’d only a chance; but yet, he has a glimpse of the Vision, and so many of his superiors are worse off! You know what the Tent-Maker says:

“‘One flash of It within the Tavern caught  
Better than in the Temple lost outright!’

Not that the tavern’s a good place to catch it, you know, but—Is anything wrong, Olive?”

Olive was sitting quietly, listening. Her sleepless night had stamped upon her face the mark of weariness, and something in both faces, graver and more lowering still than this, gave him pause, in his enthusiastic absorption in his thought.

“We have come,” said Olive, “to say good-by. We are going away from Lattimore.”

Emerson shrank, as if from the pain of a stab.

“You going?” cried he. “I’m very sorry. Why do you go, and where?”

“I hate to leave now,” said Olive, “when you need every friend and follower you have; and I couldn’t go without coming to say that if I could I’d stay, and sing, and work to build up what has fallen down in the church. But, for many reasons, I must go. I can’t—I can’t tell you all—all of them; but, sometime you’ll know. I can say this, though: Lattimore

is refusing us a living; that is, not quite; but times are hard with us."

"I believe that would come out all right in a little while," answered Emerson. "Have you quite resolved?"

"Quite," replied Olive. "Our luggage has gone to the station."

Emerson, much disquieted, walked back and forth.

"Except for Morgan," said he, "it leaves me quite without old friends. But to think of that is selfish. I want to thank you, Olive, for all you've done for me. To hear you sing, to watch you as you sing, and as you go about in the ordinary walks of life, has become a sort of inspiration to me. I wonder if you know how beautiful you are, child! I shall miss you more than I can tell."

"I don't go," answered Olive, "because I want to, but because I must."

"Where do you go?" asked Emerson.

Olive hesitated, and Mrs. Dearwester made answer.

"We're going to try," said she, "a new variety of these 'horrid spiders and unclean beetles' you read about just now. Olive and I are going down to New Orleans to go on the stage. I expect to be a star in a day or two after I get there."

"Oh, Mrs. Dearwester!" protested he. "Don't chaff me to-day. Tell me, Olive, child."

Olive handed him the telegram from Mr. McAndrew. He looked so grave as he gave it back, that his reply surprised her.

"I congratulate you," said he. "You will succeed. And as to the temptations, and the—the life, why, you must find your good where you are. I'm sure

the evil is exaggerated. It can't be much worse than—but why condemn? Be a good girl, my dear, and don't quite forget me!"

"Never!" she cried. "And whenever you find every one against you—as you may—remember that ma and I are your friends always, always!"

"You're going to have trouble, Emerson," said Mrs. Dearwester; "shameful trouble that you don't know about, before you're through. Talk about condemning! Why, how can you call such folks as you've got here by the best name a saint could give them, without condemning, I'd like to know! Talk about whited sepulchers! Why, a sepulcher's as sweet and clean as a new-scalded churn, compared with these human pus-cavities of corruption here in Lattimore. Come here, my boy, and let me kiss you: I may never see you again, Emerson. I wish I could leave you in a den of horse-thieves or a nest of rattlesnakes, or any surroundings safer and more moral than these; but I can't take you along. Good-by!"

She kissed him indignantly, and then tenderly. Olive extended her hand, gave him a convulsive pressure, and ran out. She was half-way down the square when her mother overtook her.

"Now, mommie," said she gaily. "Now for home, and luncheon and the train. Morgan, dear old fellow, has got our affairs in splendid shape, so we can go clean-handed. And how I wish I could see Mrs. Burns, and hug part-way round her at a time, and thank her!"

"You sit down in the parlor, Ollie," said her mother, who detected something abnormal in this gaiety, and in the dilated eyes and flushed cheeks of her daughter,

"and let me get something to eat. It won't be much, but have Morgan stay. It won't seem so much like eating in an undertaking establishment that's been deserted by everybody but the remains."

Morgan and Olive sat down in the parlor—alone together for the first time since the old days. He had become another man to her, since he had known of her trouble, and that she was going away. Always, here in Lattimore, he had avoided her, while seeking her mother. But now he not only devoted himself to assisting them in their arrangements, but he sought Olive's advice and instructions rather than Mrs. Dearwester's.

"Morgan," said she, as they felt the fact of their tête-à-tête, "you're a good boy. But I've been cross at you. I said to myself that I'd never save you from getting whipped again."

"Yes, you would," said he; "you'd do that much for a dog."

"Well, for a nice dog," she conceded; "but not for one of the sneaky kind that peeks at you from around the corner, and comes to the house when you're gone. You haven't been nice to me, Morgan—not a bit nice. You have never come to see me for more than the rarest *instant* of time."

"I'm not a nice person," said he.

"You—you weren't," she replied, "when you first came: but now, you're quite presentable. How does it happen?"

"I'm on the *Herald* now," he answered. "Mr. Giddings got hold of some of my stuff—something I wrote, you know—and gave me a job. So I wear better clothes than when I was in jail or carrying

a hod; and you know we're 'presentable' in direct ratio to our apparent removal from productive labor. But I shall offend against the policy of the paper sometime—I can't keep single tax out of my stuff, in some form or another; and then I'll get fired. But do you want me to tell you why I have avoided you?"

The moment he asked the question she knew the answer; but she made no reply.

"I can tell you to-day, Olive," said he; "because I know you are passing from my sphere so completely; and I shall never see you again. It is as if you lay, like Evelyn Hope, in your coffin, and I stooping over it and telling the secret that I never could utter until you were gone—for ever!"

He stopped for a moment, looking at her the while, in the way one looks at a statue, or the portrait of a departed love. She opened her lips as if to speak; but when she raised her eyes to his, her glance fell to the floor, and she remained mute.

"It was this way," he went on, in that unhurried way of his, so strangely suited to the things he was saying. "It was this way, Olive: I loved you, from that time when poor Emerson was going to whip me—but I resolved to wait until I had found myself before I said anything to you. After I got back from the capital, I went to your house, and you were gone. I sat down on that big boulder in the playground—do you remember how Emerson told us about glacial action there, and moraines, and showed us the grooves in it?—Well, I sat on that and fought myself, when I found you were gone, most of one night. Sometimes it seemed as if, by going to the school-house door and opening it, I should find you in your little old

brown dress, sitting at your desk playing sonatas, and Emerson writing outlines on the board. Once I started, because it seemed to me that I was neglecting the kindling of the fire."

He told her this, his first word of love, in a matter-of-fact manner, exactly as if he had been discussing the railway time-tables in his hand.

"I made up my mind that night," he continued, "that love and marriage and home were not for me; that I would live and die in the effort to help on the time when all men may have the hope of home, of which so many are now disinherited. So I became an agitator, or tramp, or teacher—whatever you please to call it."

"Teacher," suggested Olive.

"I don't know," he went on, "that this talking on street-corners, and sticking Blackhall stamps, and getting in jail, and forcing the word upon unwilling ears, is the best way—your mother says it isn't; but I didn't have a dress suit, and went as I was, and I've done some good. I've never cared for a woman except you. I had got so that I felt I never would again—even for you; but when I heard you were here, I knew better. I knew that if I came near you, I should do nothing but try to win you: so I stayed away, as much as I could."

Olive's eyes were bright as with unshed tears, and there was a tender little quivering smile on her lips as she spoke.

"You foolish boy!" said she, "I should have told you at once how impossible it was, and you'd have given it up. I like you awfully—I would say love, only people will put the other meaning to love; but

the idea you gave up was out of the question. I've always been going to seek my fortune—and now I'm actually starting."

"Out of the question," he repeated; "but now, as you are just stepping out of the world, for me, I want you to know how dearly I love you. Just telling you of it is a comfort to me. Isn't that a queer thing to say to a woman?"

Olive stood before him with shining eyes, dazzling him with a vision he never forgot, the vision of her pale, pitying, friendly face and her stately figure, as she swayed graciously toward him, her hand outstretched.

"Come, shake hands, Morgan," said she. "I wish you hadn't told me, and I wish it wasn't so. Sometime it will ripen to just friendship—a much better thing—I guess it's really only that now. Come and see me if I ever get within visiting distance, and don't sacrifice yourself unnecessarily. I like to think of you as mingling with your equals—and not with your inferiors. And I'm always going to see you moving upward, away from the things—you know what I mean—the hod, and the dirt, and such things. Come, mommie's calling us to the dining-room."

Their luncheon despatched—Morgan quite as usual—they piled up their bags and waited for their cab. A ring, and the sight of a telegraph boy at the door, brought Olive to a pitch of tremulous excitement.

"Oh!" said she, opening it. "I'll bet Mr. McAndrew has changed his mind!"

"Oh, Morgan, Morgan!" she cried wildly, after reading the message, "hurry up the cab! Hurry, hurry! We must go now, right now, and wait for



Olive stood before him with shining eyes. Page 198





the train at the station, or anywhere. Read this, ma!"

As Morgan went out at the door, Mrs. Dearwester read the following:

I am informed you leave Lattimore at 3:00. I shall arrive on No. 4 at 2:25, and shall be at your home at 2:30. Do not leave until you see me. I have something of the last importance to say to you. For God's sake, give me a chance!

JOHN BLOODGOOD.

"I don't exactly relish the idea," said Mrs. Dearwester, "of rushing frantically to cover, for fear of John Bloodgood. I guess I'll stay the odd half-hour."

"No, ma, no!" Olive urged in a frightened stage-whisper. "We shall avoid a—something unpleasant—if we go now! It's almost time; and there's Morgan with the cab—it must have been coming. Hurry, ma, hurry!"

## CHAPTER XVII

### A NOTEWORTHY DEPARTURE

Something wrong. Co-respondent getting out of town on No. 2. Leaving for good. Furniture stored or sold. Will await instructions. FEEK.

Such was the telegram handed to Superintendent John Bloodgood within two hours after his start for Chicago, on a visit to Mildred. The "co-respondent," in all his talks with Feek, was Olive; Emerson, the "defendant." The terms lent themselves to secrecy, and indicate the lines on which their combinations were formed.

He stared for a moment at the telegram, and then ran to the air-lever, in a mad impulse to stop the limited on which he was traveling; but he withheld his hand at the thought of his predicament if once detained in this expanse of brown fields. He must go back; he must! She should not escape him. He could not live without her. He would stop her going at any cost. An ordinary person of cool blood and well-regulated pulse would have pronounced him hardly sane, as he walked up and down the car. He could see Olive's face and form before his eyes as plainly as if she had been there in bodily presence. Once he spoke her name so loudly that other passengers heard him, and looked curiously at the very tall, very well-dressed and extremely distinguished-looking

man, who was behaving so very like a maniac: but Bloodgood never knew it.

"Mr. Vesey," said he to the conductor as he came through, "I must stop and go back with Whitten—to Lattimore. Do we pass as usual, at Ellington?"

Mr. Vesey pulled out of his pocket a bunch of yellow tissue-paper.

"No," said he deliberately, "Whitten's late. We go on to Corley Junction."

"My God!" ejaculated Bloodgood. "My God, Vesey, when does that put me into Lattimore?"

"Well," said Vesey, still deliberate; "she's due in there at one-nine. From Ellington to Corley is, say, thirty-five minutes for us. Whitten may make it back in less on account of the grade—say thirty. If he loses no more time—and he can't gain any on this schedule—"

"For God's sake, Vesey, get through!" cried Bloodgood. "It'll be two, won't it?"

"Right around two, sir," answered Vesey. "Anything the matter, sir?"

"I can't wait in a station—I'll run on until we meet. Send a telegram for me, Vesey, and notify Whitten to take me on at Corley. Rush this!"

The word went up and down the train that the Old Man was "throwing conniptions" in the Pullman, and had sent a telegram to a lady; and the trainmen, from conductor to news agent, filed by to have a look at him. He was quieter, now, though even his fellow-travelers returning from Corley Junction knew that he was a hunted or haunted man as he sat struggling for calmness. He was about to see Olive; but to what purpose? He had sent the message and had returned

because he could not endure the idea of her slipping away from him; and now, when he must meet her, what should he—what could he say? He had resolved never to give her up, never to marry her; but the alternative implied in this carried with its acceptance a siege, with sappers and miners, and not a taking by storm. And his present movement looked like a storming-party. Such were the thoughts revolving in a turmoil, out of which came no clarity of resolve more definite than that of going to her and preventing her departure. Sometimes he wondered if the plot against Emerson had been disclosed to her; but that, he thought, was impossible, and it did not matter, anyhow, as he should not appear in it. Nothing was of importance, now, but the one thing of getting into her presence. The most violent struggle of his life with the volcanic element in the Bloodgood nature was upon him, and he was dominated by certain blind elemental forces, rather than by reason.

He ran up to the door of the Dearwester cottage, rang, and waited, stung by the gnats and nettles of a burning impatience. The bell sounded emptily through the rooms. He went to a window and peeped under the shade, seeing nothing but the dusty chaos of recent removal. He listened, but heard no sound within. He looked at his watch; it was well on toward three. They were gone!

"To the L. and G. W. station," said he to the cabman. "I want all the time I can get before Number Two pulls out. Drive fast!"

Leaping from the cab, he ran into the waiting-room, looking for her figure—the figure he could not bear the thought of seeing nevermore. She was not in

the waiting-room. She was not about the baggage-room. She was not in the group in front of the station. Where was she? Down at the farthest end of the platform stood three—an elderly woman, a stocky, medium-sized man, and—yes! It was she!

Now he must be circumspect—no more hurrying or excitement. He must be John Bloodgood, their friend, quite as of use and wont. He saw them start—who was that fellow with them?—as he approached. Olive shrank away as if to flee, but was restrained by Mrs. Dearwester. Mr. Bloodgood's smile was drawn and quivering as he lifted his hat and said: "Not going away, are you, Miss Dearwester?"

"Yes," said her mother, "we thought we would, if there was no objections. But you needn't have hypered your head off to catch us; for we left the rent at the bank for you."

"Miss Dearwester," said he, receiving, but recking not of the wound dealt him by Mrs. Dearwester, "may I have a word with you in private?"

Morgan walked out of earshot.

"Shall I go?" asked her mother.

"No, ma," said Olive, "stay with me. What did you wish to say, Mr. Bloodgood?"

Had Bloodgood foreseen this situation, exactly as it arose—the tall queenly empress of his dreams fronting him and calmly asking this question; the old lady with the piercing eyes, and the little bitter smile playing about the corners of her mouth; at his back, the "fellow" who was with them; the momentary expectation of the whistle of the train for which they waited; and he, with nothing to say which he dared say—not even his lover's frenzy could

have driven him to the encounter. The train whistled, and was coming to a halt, as his answer rose to his lips.

"I have a great deal to say to you," said he. "Olive, I'm sure, if you knew all that Lattimore has in store for you, you would not go. I came to beg of you not to go!"

"Is that all?" asked Olive.

"We think we know some of the things that Lattimore has got in store for us," said Mrs. Dearwester; "but it's dreadfully kind of you to put yourself in such a sweat just to give us the benefit of your superior knowledge. We don't doubt but what you know more about what's likely to happen to us, if we stay, than we do. But I never thought to see a Bloodgood telegraphing himself such a distance just to tell one of my family she was making a mistake in location: it's dreadfully kind!"

Bloodgood staggered from this facer. He was being shot at and pricked and stung by the shafts of this terrible woman. Moreover, he was losing ground. Olive was not trembling, now. He was ceasing to be formidable.

And then to his own soul he confessed for what he had returned. Back in the heart of his being he had known that in the sending of the telegram to her his towering plans had fallen and toppled down, that his coming back was a burning of his bridges. John Bloodgood was no longer a scheming, plotting, designing worshiper of Mammon, but a man fighting for his girl.

"Is that all?" repeated Olive. "It was quite unnecessary, if so, to give yourself so much—"

"No!" he cried. "It is not all! Olive, I love you. You've driven me mad with love. I can't let you go. I want you for my wife. I can make you happy, Olive, happy! I don't know where you're going, or to what—only that you're going away from me. But you'll never find the life I'll make for you if you'll give me the chance. I've only a moment to say what means life or death to me—and I can't say it well, darling; but there's nothing to say, after all, Olive, except that I love you and want you for my wife. Tell me yes, darling, tell me yes!"

"Kneeling down used to be the style, didn't it?" asked Mrs. Dearwester casually.

"Stop, mama!" said Olive. "Mr. Bloodgood, I am surprised at this avowal. I had no idea that you would allow any preference for me to lead you into anything like this. I may do you an injustice, but I regard you as a scoundrel. Our train is about starting. We bid you good day, Mr. Bloodgood!"

She swept by him, and Morgan Yeager fell in beside her, carrying her bags. Bloodgood came up on the other side, his excitement making him blind to appearances.

"You do me an injustice!" he cried, seizing upon the one possible admission in her answer. "Give me time to clear myself! Give me a chance!"

"It is of no use," said she. "Please be so kind as not to follow me farther."

"Mr. Yeager," said Mrs. Dearwester, as they halted to allow passengers to precede them, "I want you and these people to know that Mr. Bloodgood is now engaged in making a proposal for the hand of my daughter. It may be useful for you to know this,



if any of his schemes ever bring her name in question!"

"I'll remember it," said Morgan, giving the bags to the porter, while the people present stared at the strange group. "Stand back, sir!"

The women walked between them, up the steps, and into the vestibule.

"Who the hell are you?" snarled Bloodgood, angrily pushing at the immovable figure.

The train started, and Bloodgood saw the treasure he had so madly sought, gliding, rolling, sweeping from him for ever. He sprang to catch the hand-rail of the rear car as it swept by. Morgan caught him, as a foot-ball player tackles a runner, and rolled him on the cinder ballasting of the track, in the smother of the wake of the train. Bloodgood rose, and the next moment the blow, that would have stretched Morgan senseless, shot past his averted head. As Bloodgood's blow carried him forward, Morgan's right hand jarred him slightly as it found his cheek, and then the left shot with a terrific uppercut to the chin, and John Bloodgood, for the second time that day, went down and out. And Olive, looking back, like Lot's wife, was turned, not to a pillar of salt, but to something over five-and-a-half feet of shapeliest womanhood, tingling with the joy of seeing her champion standing victorious over his fallen foe—a savage and unlady-like feeling, no doubt, but one which fixed on the film of memory the vanishing glimpse which took Lattimore out of her life for ever.

It was Feek who first reached the prostrate superintendent, while the tramp, Silverthorn, rather well dressed, now, was the one who helped him slowly to

his feet. Bloodgood was bleeding and unsteady; but when a policeman laid his hand on Morgan's shoulder, he had so far recovered as to be able to say to Feek:

"This must stop here. Tell the officer I say to let him go. I struck the first blow. Come up to my office, when you've fixed it—no, to my house. I'll take this carriage."

Feek said a word to the officer, and Morgan was free.

"Knocking down a railway superintendent, Mr. Duggan," said he, "don't seem to be half the crime that it is to talk single tax on the street. That is, when it's a part of their game to keep it dark."

"Who arre ye?" asked the officer.

"Yeager of the *Herald*," answered Morgan. "That's my card, if you want me."

"The arnychist!" exclaimed Duggan. "All right, sor; from what I learn, we shan't want ye."

"Yeager," said Silverthorn, "this thing will be the making of me. After what I heard him say, and after helping him up, he has just got to give me a hearing on the Polyvolt Motor! But it's going to be hard to keep you in on it, Yeager. Why will you make yourself so obnoxious to capital!"

"Feek," said Mr. Bloodgood late that afternoon, as he sat, patched and bandaged, in his study-chair, "don't ever mention this thing to me again, and see that the papers don't mention it."

"All right," said Feek; "but it was a newspaper man that hit you."

"What paper?"

"The *Herald*."

"Fix it with Giddings," said Bloodgood. "And at the proper time, go after the fellow's scalp. What's his name?"

"Yeager," said Feek; "a sort of socialist. He was in jail once. He's doing a line of labor and political stuff. He's the defendant's main squeeze in this First Church fight."

"Damn him!" ejaculated Mr. Bloodgood. "*Damn* him! Get him, at the first chance. And this business this afternoon—I've been a fool, Feek, but I'm a fool no longer. Who were among the passengers getting on that train—any local people?"

"No," said Feek, "all strangers."

"Did any one stand within hearing while I was talking to—to those parties?"

"Nobody but Silverthorn, the inventor I told you of," replied Feek. "He's the man that helped me to get you to your feet."

"Well, you can keep him quiet," answered Bloodgood. "If necessary, we can promise him something for his machine. Do you hear, Feek, I'm a fool no longer. This thing," pointing to his bruised face, "is a good thing, and good enough for me. And, now, spring the mine under the—the defendant—as soon as the devil will let you. Make it complete. Make it so no decent man will vote for him, if he sticks; but above all, make it so he won't let it come to a vote. And after he gives up on the vote matter, follow him just the same."

"Very well, sir," replied Feek.

"As I say, I'm a fool no longer, Feek, but that doesn't prevent me from seeing that this brother-in-law of mine has been too friendly with the—the

co-respondent, and has run her out of town to forestall our movements. He has heard something of it, or his sense of guilt makes him suspicious. Fix him so that a proud woman can't live with him. I wish we had a better witness than that nigger, but even such a witness can tell the truth. And if ever I doubted its truth, I don't any more. He won her with his silky speech and his curly hair and his red lips, just as he won my sister—until she laughs at me, in public! A man that is ready to turn society over is always a free lover, in theory and practice. He's guilty, Feek, guilty as hell, and I want you to go after him, and go after him now!"

"Very well," answered Feek. "Of course I can't appear in it. But we'll have a committee appointed to confront him, right away. And I think you'll see the monkey coming down the pole early next week."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### CHIEF MEN AND HONORABLE WOMEN

Morgan Yeager had much quiet and solemn joy in his curious avowal to Olive. Almost any other man making it, even hopelessly, would have half expected some Priscilla-like hint that, in spite of his renunciatory attitude, he was privileged to speak for himself; but not so with him. He had never even thought of such a thing. In fact, he had not thought of speaking at all, until placed under the stress of feeling induced by her departure. Full and rich as his soul was in aspiration, he was utterly without ambitions. He expected to pass his life and meet his death among the poor, the disinherited, the landless—those who, however much they might differ from the great Teacher in other respects, resembled Him in that they had not where to lay their heads. So he was not at all disappointed when Olive met his declaration in that sisterly way which accepted so frankly the impossibility he stated—he felt uplifted by the remembrance of her having heard him so respectfully: and he enshrined the one passage between them when for a moment they talked of their relations as lover and loved, as do more prosperous wooers the transports of soft achievement. He had had thus much of the life all men desire. It was not marriage, and home, and the circle about the fireside, and the com-

panionship of old age, and the two graves side by side; but it was all he would ever have, and, to a man of silent and in-looking habit, it was much. And it made heavier than ever his duty to Emerson with reference to the plot of his fellow-communicants to drive him from his pulpit.

How should he advise Emerson? No doubt the false but plausible and devilish affidavits would be used to beat him from his purpose of letting the membership of the church decide by ballot at the close of his series of politico-economic, or sociological sermons, whether he should go or stay. His abandonment of his position would be looked upon as a confession of defeat. If he stood firm and defied them, what followed? The "proofs" would be given to the congregation, under the plea that such matters should be known before the vote; they would become public; they were very likely to be fatal to Emerson's hold upon his church—such charges being the very ones people delight to believe of a preacher or a reformer; and, in any case, the calumny would follow poor Olive to the ends of the earth.

Morgan was quite in the habit of accepting the buffets of an unbelieving and enslaved world, in the spirit of Stephen's "lay not this sin to their charge"; but now he ground his teeth in rage, sometimes, as he thought of the inner circle of the Bloodgoods, Deweys, and their like, and of such tools as Feek. He could quite forgive Finneran and Speck Toombs, he thought; for they were ignorant and sorely pressed. Revolving these things in his mind, he entered Emerson's study, and found his friend hard at work on the sermon next to the last of the series.

"Come in, Morgan!" he shouted, seeing him in the vestibule. "You don't come often enough."

"No?" answered Morgan questioningly. "I've been coming twice a day, until yesterday. I was helping Olive and her mother off, you know."

"Oh, that's so; I know," replied Emerson; "but you're my right hand, you know; and I need you more than ever, now that the Dearwesters are gone. Morgan, if the life she's going to spoils Olive Dearwester, it will stain the sweetest flower that ever tried to bloom in it."

"It won't," answered Morgan.

"She's done a good deal for me in this work," Emerson continued, "and I need her—you can't think how much I need her—next Sunday. If she could sing *The New Kingdom* after my sermon, it would send the people out with tearful eyes and throbbing hearts.—I tell you, Morgan, the people of our churches are forgetting how to love one another. They love only their families and friends, and *do not the publicans the same?*"

Still the uncertainty as to how he should advise Emerson kept Morgan silent as to the shameful news he came to tell. So, to gain time, he said: "What's the sermon to be?"

"Well, you know," said Emerson, "we can't put too much stress on the thought that the Kingdom of God taught by Jesus was not a thing to be attained after death, but here, in this life, in righteous institutions, making love possible as a rule of conduct."

"I know," answered Morgan; "I believe you're right about that, though at first I didn't and didn't much care."

"I remember what you used to say," said Emerson.

"To me it is the central truth of Christianity; and, did you ever think—you put so much stress on pure science—that man's evolution can go on only by such an adjustment to his environment as will end the struggle of man with man, and leave only the battle with nature aside from man—a battle pretty nearly won? See how the bees and ants, among themselves, have solved this thing; and to think, man the spiritual animal, still fighting with man in armies and navies, and in the competition of the marts!"

"I see," said Morgan; "you say, place man where his material wants will be sure of easy satisfaction, so that he can expand mentally. Then will come Spencer's equilibrium of births and deaths—it is here already with the educated classes; and with justice in distribution, which will come of its own accord under just government, as justice in the circulation of the blood comes of its own accord in health, society will have attained a stable status founded on the principles of democracy."

"A social 'eternal life'," said Emerson, "instead of the rise, decline and fall we've been told every civilization must have—a piece of solemn atheism! But I'm going to make this concrete. I'm going to show as well as I can what Lattimore will be when the Kingdom of God comes. I'll first show the poverty found in Lattimore—out west here, we think complacently that we are free from it, you know."

Morgan laughed bitterly.

"I'd like to show some of the comfortable people about a little," said he. "But they call blindness 'optimism.' And if they happen to know too much of



the truth, they get it off their minds by 'turning it over to the Lord,' as Brother Dewey says."

"I'll show them about next Sunday!" cried Emerson. "I'll show them whole square miles in this town where the average family must go out into the street with the loss of a month's work; where children haven't clothes or books for school, and grow up in darkness; where little girls do nothing but fill cans or paste labels, or carry cash in stores. I'll show them forty families living in squalor in one half-block—and that owned by a member of this church. I'll show them the crowd at the gates of the packing-houses day by day, begging for a chance to work in a red slush of water and blood and entrails, and not getting it. And I'll show them the way our farm-hands are degenerating from self-respecting young farmers to diseased tramps, and our tenant-farmers to rack-rented victims of absentee landlords."

"Oh, there's enough of that side to tell!" assented Morgan. "Now for the kingdom."

"Well," said Emerson, looking straight forward, "I thought I would handle it like this: I'll first assume that all the highways have been taken over by the people—the government—whether wires, or rails, or pipes, and that justice in the use of the earth shall have come by freeing from tax everything produced by man, and taking all ground-rent in a tax—would you call it by its controversy-name, single tax?"

"I don't know why not," answered Yeager; "but use your judgment as to that."

"Then I'll take a number of representative men," Emerson continued; "and I believe I'll call them by name and show how it would affect them. I'll show

how the security of Dewey's mortgages would be impaired, but how much easier it would be for the average mortgagee to pay the debt, on account of being quit of the robberies of the public-utility corporations, the landlord, and the taxes on his production. Dewey's land-values would be wiped out, but he would still have his improvements, untaxed, and his rents, reduced to the interest-charge and repair-charge on the buildings. Yet, he would still be rich—if in such a kingdom, he would care to stay so.

“Take Elkins or Tolliver, pure and simple speculators. Their vocation would be gone; for land would never rise in selling-value, but only in taxing-value, and no one would want it, except for use. But in a righteous realm, such men would be useful producers, instead of cumberers of the ground.

“Take Trescott, who sold his farm for fifty thousand dollars for town lots: he would be left out on his farm—feeding steers, and happier and better than now—though of course I can't say ‘better’ publicly.”

“It would be so, though,” said Morgan, “if reports speak true. But how'll you treat the big packers who own houses here?”

“I'll show,” said Emerson, “that the Kingdom of God would be set up without bothering to take from them their ill-gotten wealth, and that they, like Dewey, would still be very rich. But as soon as just taxation had destroyed land-monopoly, and people's highways had killed shipping favors, their men would refuse to work for wages such as they now get, because unused lands would be available all about them, and they could employ themselves. Wages would go up, until there would be no great surplus left for employ-

ers. The result would be that, naturally, the property would pass into the hands of coöperative organizations of working-men, in which the old employers might have interests to the extent of the values of their plants. That's what Christ's kingdom would do to the packers and their kind.

"Such a man as Doctor Aylesbury would have a community of well-to-do people to serve, instead of a very few rich, some well-to-do, and a mass of poor. Cohen the loan man would hardly do well, in universal prosperity, where everybody worked for himself, or could if he wished. Mr. Lattimore would still practise law, but I should expect the lawyer to become a rarer and higher thing—a teacher of the philosophy of human relations. Burns would still be a railway conductor, and John Bloodgood would still be his superintendent—in the government employ. I'll go on in this way, keeping them interested, every one on the alert to see whose name will be called next—it's dull the way I tell it now, of course—until I get to the working-men, the masses, the lost, the outcast, the ones I discussed at the beginning. I was working on that as you came in. I am anxious to know what you think of it."

"Emerson!" Morgan cried. "How, in God's name, can men be so blind as to hunt, and hound, and traduce a man preaching such a doctrine as that, like dogs that bite the hand that dresses their wounds! I had something else to say to you; but I've decided to wait until after you've preached that sermon. Where can I find you Monday morning?"

"Right here," answered Emerson. "Come in early; I've a lot to talk to you about. And how I wish

Olive were here to sing *The New Kingdom* for us after that sermon!"

"This is the doctrine of justice," said he, in closing this, perhaps his last sermon in the First Church. "Of mere justice, which is less than love, and is included in it. For preaching these, Jesus was crucified, and His prophet-forerunners and His disciples killed. '*Let him that stole,*' says one of these, '*steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good.*' Stealing is wrongfully taking what belongs to another. How many of our great fortunes could survive the application of this test?

"Says another, '*Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.*' This is from the Christian Gospel of James, a book on whose inspiration this church claims to be founded. Yet I have said nothing so severe, in these sermons: although the rich in the United States, in every civilized land, and in this church, are as cruel and greedy and rapacious as those fulminated against by Saint James. It was utterances like these, and because they stirred up the people, that reared the cross, and fills history

with the smoke of burning martyrs. Had I preached almost any merely theological innovation, Lattimore would not have cared; but because I preach the economics of Jesus, Lattimore gnashes on me with her teeth. Yet *I* do not go so far as to say, *Sell what thou hast and give to the poor*, as Jesus did—yea, and was obeyed by thousands: but I say only, ‘Take your fence from the land you do not use, the land God made for all, that the poor may use it. Get off the backs of the poor!’ I do not denounce you as James denounces you; but what I say, I say in the spirit of Paul, *For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed: but by equality*.

“I sometimes think that God was most good to those rare souls He thought worthy of martyrdom, in that He permitted them, in one great passion of suffering, to pour themselves out as oil upon the torch of their apostolate, kindling a light that all must see. To him who, with the weak engine of persuasion, beats and beats and beats upon hard and obdurate hearts, and finds them still adamant; who pleads for truth which was divinely pleaded for two thousand years, and still is denied even by those who claim to follow it; to be hated for preaching the power of love; to know the better things which brotherhood has in store, and find those who most need it, most set against it; to reach forth in the darkness for some hand of sympathy, and find only emptiness: to him it were relief, even stretched on a tree with pierced hands and feet, to feel the soft hand of death steal down over the aching lids, and to die, saying, *Forgive them, for they know not what they do!*”

Mrs. Courtright stood in her pew as the congrega-

tion was dismissed, her eyes softened by her husband's eloquence: but when she saw the people sweep down the aisles to touch his hand before they went out, their faces beaming with the rapture to which they had been lifted, she hardened, seeing none of the old, influential, "paying members" among them; but only the blowsy and red-necked members of the lower classes.

A few of the old "pillars," standing together in the body of the church as if by prearrangement, clustered about Mr. Dewey and waited. He saw the crush of admirers about Emerson, and shook his head.

"Better put it off until to-morrow," whispered he, and they went out. As of old, "the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him: and they could not find what they might do; for the people all hung upon him, listening."

Morgan Yeager saw them, and knew as by intuition that they were the ones put forward to place Emerson in the vise prepared by others; and on Monday he sought out their intended victim. Emerson listened to the story calmly—more calmly than Morgan told it; yet his countenance grew older, more livid, more worn, as by the asperities of years, before he broke silence. Morgan looked at the colorless face with its ashy lips, and knew what it was to see a man age before his eyes: yet Emerson seemed calm. Slowly and with apparent difficulty, as if weakened by illness, he told Morgan the story of the special car. He broke out into no condemnation of any one; he simply told the facts, and then blamed himself.

"I was at fault," said he, when he had related the

story of the trouble with the porter. "He was an ignorant negro, and he may not have meant any harm. He waked Olive the night before, by hanging about her as she slept—she thought he kissed her, and—"

"I'd have killed him!" cried Morgan, clenching his fists. "If I really thought he did that, I'd—"

"I felt a good deal the same way myself, Morgan," answered Emerson; "but I'd no right to strike him as I did. He may have meant no harm. There may have been some explanation. But long ago, I found out that I seem carried away on provocation, by the desire, the physical craving to fight. It took me out of foot-ball. I struck a man in a scrimmage, for fouling me, and almost killed him. He alone knew it, and he never told. I felt the same impulse when I struck the negro. I deserve to suffer for it: but Olive! Great God! They have twisted her very virtues—her sitting by me when wife and physician were away; her fright at the negro; her interest in my work—all turned against her by her brethren and sisters. Morgan, she must be saved, if possible. And my wife! She is a—a little prone to jealousy, Morgan; or would be—"

"It is possible to save her," said Morgan, meaning Olive.

"How?" asked Emerson.

"They will probably make two demands," answered Morgan. "First, that you give up the referendum; second, that you resign your pastorate."

"I could never do the first and refuse the second," replied Emerson, pausing in his pacing back and forth, and clenching his hands. "It is win all or

lose all. Morgan, these vipers can be defeated! I can go before my congregation and tell them all the plain, simple, innocent truth. Here was no prearrangement, no scheming to meet. My wife knows she was called away by her mother's illness. Kittrick and his wife unexpectedly got off at Hammersley. Why, we thought we should find half a carful of people when we got on!"

Morgan sat mute. He was still at a loss how to advise his friend. On the one side, the blasting of Olive's reputation—he never thought of Amy; on the other, the surrender on the verge of victory. As he pondered, while Emerson paced back and forth, there came the sound of shuffling footsteps without, and answering Mr. Courtright's "Come in," there entered, first, Smith, the elderly working-man with whom Morgan had been in argument that night so many months ago, when he was arrested; second, Mrs. Aylesbury, with a roll of papers in her hand; third, Kittrick, the red-mustached road-master; fourth, Mrs. Captain Tolliver, looking distressed and frightened; and, fifth, the elder Mr. Dewey. And as Emerson looked upon his rapacious face, with its beak of a nose, and at the women beside him, he thought: "*But the Jews urged on the devout women of honourable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out from their borders!* Antioch or Lattimore, the method is the same."

"Will you be seated?" said he.

But they remained standing, as if conscious that the deed they had come to do was not one to be accomplished, seated, as friends with friends.



## CHAPTER XIX

### A BEAUTIFUL CAST OF THE HARPOON

Mr. Dewey looked straight before him; Mr. Kittrick looked at Smith the working-man—who held his hat before him and studied the muddied rug. Mrs. Aylesbury's glance sought Dewey, while Mrs. Tolliver, a pretty, middle-aged woman with an irresolute air, looked at Morgan deprecatingly, as if to say, "I find no evil in this man; but I was appointed to come; why, I know not." As might be the case with those engaged in a sacrifice to Moloch, none looked in the other's eyes, or steadily at the offered one. Emerson stood glancing from one to the other, waiting for the denunciation. At last, Mr. Dewey spoke.

"Our committee, Mr. Courtright," said he, "is headed by Mrs. Aylesbury. She will make known our errand."

"Hadn't we better wait," inquired Morgan, "until the full committee is present, if I may be pardoned for offering advice?"

The members of the committee looked about at one another, as if to make an enumeration, and then at Morgan in scornful inquiry.

"I mean Brother Feek and the Bloodgoods," said Morgan. "Surely, they aren't the men to turn over to others the carrying to a conclusion of the job they have put up; or to hide behind the skirts of women!"

Dewey started, and passed his tongue over his dry lips. Kittrick reddened. Smith turned his hat over, and stole a look at Morgan as if wondering what he meant. Mrs. Aylesbury flushed, with a look of mingled guilt and indignation, but stood to her guns. Her long devotion to semi-forensic matters in clubs and societies, the vast number of papers she had prepared upon matters sociologic, social, political, historical, artistic and literary, had been a preparation for just such a piece of actual work as this. Therefore, with something of the same feeling as that with which the young lawyer utters his first "May it please the Court"—with an added loftiness of religious motive—trembling a little at the unexpected presence of Morgan, and at his evident willingness to take part in the proceedings, Mrs. Aylesbury struck manfully back at the pastor's offensive ally.

"I believe this person," said she, "is one of the few men in town with prison records, who are not so-called members of this church. Our business is private, and not for the newspapers."

"Mr. Yeager," answered Emerson, "is my friend—"

"And is personally, as you suggest, beyond the reach—we may differ as to whether above or below—of the contamination of the First Church," interposed Morgan. "And, as for the newspaper, we have to keep it mailable, you know, and so can't tell the whole truth; and I'm not on the criminal run, anyhow. So Mr. Dewey and his associates are safe."

"Mr. Yeager will stay," said Emerson. "What is your errand with me?"

"Mr. Courtright," said Mrs. Aylesbury, in the manner of one reciting a well-committed piece, "the busi-

ness of our call gives us all great pain. Especially is it of a nature to give great pain to a lady. But it deals with matters of peculiar interest to ladies of pure character in this church, and especially to those to whom Providence has committed the task of rearing daughters, and of bringing them up in family and church relationships so unsullied that thoughts of an impure and degrading character may be as foreign to their minds as to the white-winged angels about the throne."

Here Mrs. Aylesbury paused, as if to give this implication of lofty spirit, so well put, an opportunity to become absorbed, and then, with a gesture of inhibition toward Morgan, whose manner of lifting his head gave her the impression that he was about to speak, she dashed hurriedly on.

"Last night," she continued, "a meeting of a number of the strong men and women whose labors, in years gone by, before the serpent entered into our Eden, established and built up this church—"

"Under God, Mrs. Aylesbury," interjected Dewey.

"Who, under God," went on Mrs. Aylesbury, "made this the great church it once was—met to consider certain matters which have come to our ears, affecting the life and morals of the person who is, unfortunately, technically its pastor; and, after prayer for light and leading, Messrs. Dewey, Kittrick and Smith, and Mrs. Tolliver and myself were selected to call upon you, and, in a Christian spirit, confer with you."

"I have been for some months so unused to calls from any of those present," said Emerson, "that I feel sure it must be something unusual, in spirit or in fact, that brings you here."

"Our first business," went on Mrs. Aylesbury, "is to ask you whether, in view of the way in which the church is being divided and wickedly wrecked by your so-called teachings, you will not abandon your present worldly and unchristian course, refrain from votes, and other political and divisive measures, and resign this charge. We are authorized to say that that old, respectable and substantial portion of the membership represented by us, are unanimous in the opinion that your usefulness here is long since over, and that you should resign, forthwith."

"I have been greatly troubled," replied Emerson, "over this matter. I have not seen my way clear to do as you request, although all the arguments you can possibly present for it, I have already considered. I thought this vote would be the proper way of getting the sentiment of the church. You, no doubt, regard the influx of new members as a fact vitiating its fairness. I look in the same way upon the intrigues of those members of the church who take your view, by which they coerce their employees, and use business relations, such as debtor and creditor, banker and depositor, to turn members against me. Doubtless you have some proof as to what your numbers are?"

Triumphantly the "devout woman of honorable estate" turned to Mr. Kittrick.

"Please hand that petition to Brother Courtright," said she; and one could hear in the martial ring of her voice the joy of command, long her due, and at last achieved.

Awkwardly, Kittrick hoisted up from the depths of his pocket a soiled and folded paper, and handed

it to Mr. Courtright. It was a petition asking for his resignation. Emerson's face grew sadder as he glanced over it, and saw the names of so many who had come weeping to the altar in his revival. It seemed to contain the name of almost every merchant, banker, corporation manager, and, generally, all "safe, conservative, paying members," all the scribes and Pharisees, and almost every railway employee, bank clerk, salesman, and factory employee in the church, except those known as "the new crowd," and all the wives and dependents of such people. Here were scores who had come palpitating with new fervor to serve God, and joined this church founded on love, under his ministry. Love in the abstract had delighted their souls: in the concrete, it only moved their hate. Or, perhaps, it was only their yielding to the pressure of an authority too strong to be resisted. Emerson, struck to the heart by this alignment of the opposition, laid the petition down with a sigh.

"This," said he, breaking a long silence, "—it is not what you came to talk about? Perhaps you had better go on. I prefer to answer your whole case."

"You won't resign, then?" blustered Dewey, who was habituated to obedience. "You insist on holding out against such a petition as that!"

"I have started out," said Emerson, "to make this an outpost of the Kingdom of God, instead of a social club with a religious ritual—the dry husk of religion. So I have begun to preach the abolition of the laws which make it impossible for man to do right. I saw, at once, that I could not carry with me every member—as soon as I preached my first Christian sermon. I am sorry, inexpressibly sorry, that so

many are against the religion of Jesus: but I do not yet see that I should abandon the work. You have something more: may I ask what it is?"

Mr. Dewey handed to Mrs. Aylesbury a packet of papers, and nodded to her to proceed. Morgan's soul revolted at the sight of this woman's evident glorying in the mere matter of managing such an affair against a man, and as the representative and leader of men; at the offensive air of masculinity with which she flitted open the folded papers.

"She thinks *she's* doing this!" thought he. "A helpless piece shoved forward by those who play the game!"

"You are correct," said she with a mannish emphasis, which, from her, sounded like a sneer; "we have something more. We regard it as safer"—a suggestive circumflex marked the delivery of this word—"to retain the originals of these papers. These are carbon copies, signed as originals—really they are originals. You know how they do those things!" She paused suddenly, seeing that her style had dropped to feminine colloquialisms, and hoarsening her voice, concluded: "We apprehend that they will be found amply adequate to apprise you of the situation."

Emerson looked for a moment at the papers, and threw them down with a fierce gesture upon the table: there was a red glow in his eyes, and a grisly lifting of the white lip, as he stood fronting them, his eyes turning from Dewey to Kittrick, like those of some great Saint Bernard dog, which, beaten and wounded by a cruel master, finally turns upon him, with the bared teeth and thunderous growl that herald righteous revolt. Mrs. Tolliver gave a little frightened

cry, and the men shrank back to the door. Emerson's fingers gripped the edge of the table.

"Please retire for ten minutes," said he at last, very calmly, and in a low voice. "I shall consult with Mr. Yeager, and you may return for your answer."

"It won't do to lose your temper, old man!" said Morgan, when the committee had hastily gone out into the body of the church. "That would be disastrous."

"And wrong," added Emerson. "*Resist not evil* is a hard saying, sometimes, though. See what they have had sworn to, here, Morgan! Can they, can any one, believe this? If they do not—if they put this forth not feeling that they know it to be true, there is no crime beneath or beyond them! Read these!"

"Got up in some law office," said Morgan, "in legal and logical form. Affidavit of Mrs. Swett, your landlady, that you said Miss Dearwester was an old sweetheart of yours, that she had heard you speak of having carried her in your arms. In its letter, that's true, I suppose, and also that you introduced Olive into her house while yourself lodging there."

"Yes," answered Emerson; "and in spirit, perjury."

"Affidavit of young Mr. Dewey," read Morgan, "that you recommended Olive to him for a place in the choir. Copy of your note attached."

"That's true, too," said Emerson.

"Yes," observed Morgan, "but what of it? If there isn't anything stronger—affidavits of two or three people about your calling often at the Dearwester cottage."

"In heaven's name," ejaculated the minister, "why not?"

"Affidavits of various people of Angus Falls as to **your** being seen together a good deal there."

"I had to see her every morning about the music," **cried** Emerson. "And Amy was with me!"

"Did you read these affidavits of William Toombs, **the** porter, and J. J. Finneran, the brakeman?" asked **M**organ, crushing them in his hand. "God damn **their** perjured souls!"

This curse, reverberating through this room in a **sacred** building, like an echo of Bishop Ernulphus, **went** without rebuke or protest.

"No," answered Emerson. "I—I didn't get that **far**. Are they—what you thought—what Mrs. Burns **hinted**?"

"Worse," said Morgan; "and here's Doctor Ayles-**bury's** statement of the man's injuries, and a copy **of** your request that he be given treatment at your **expense**; and, by heaven! here's one showing that **Olive** has gone to join a theatrical troupe! It's **pre-  
pared** with the ingenuity of a fiend. The press, from **the** Atlantic to the Pacific, are printing editorials **about** you, and running special stuff from Lattimore, **and** calling you an anarchist and socialist, as they **always** do any one whose ideas are not standard-**ized**; and if these charges come out, there won't be **one** man in a hundred anywhere that won't believe **that** you imported a woman of doubtful character **for** your choir, and hired a special train with the **money** donated to you for your evangelistic work, **and** used it for a two days' assignation with an actress: **and** beat into insensibility a poor porter who objected **to** your disgraceful conduct! They like to believe **things** like that, of preachers."



The whaler, calmly looking on, while his barbed iron tears the bleeding vitals of some leviathan of the deep, watches not the struggles of his victim, crimsoning the waters with the blood of his last agony, with less of pity than did this committee of the First Church of Lattimore watch the torment of their minister from the harpoon they had struck to his heart. They remembered with elation the ashy paleness of his lips as he commanded them to retire, deeming it the white flag of surrender; and they stood about in the beautiful temple, exulting, while the two old friends solemnly considered the fateful, hateful thing before them: how such an accusation would affect Emerson's wife; what would be its consequences to poor innocent Olive, just entering upon a life full of traps and temptations, wherein her panoply of good name might turn the scale of fate and sometime save her; whether, in the face of it, with its marshaled mixture of truth and lie, their forces could be relied upon to stand the assault that would surely be made upon them—until it was time for the inquisitors to resume their *fin-de-siècle auto-da-fe*. Mrs. Aylesbury, her plumes tossing like the helmet of Navarre, led the file of prosecutors, with the air of one whose hand, predestined to rule, had at last found the helm of state.

"Brother Courtright," said she, a mocking note of sarcasm in her voice, "have you come to a decision?"

"We lightly say 'brother' and 'sister'," said Emerson, "when brotherhood is furthest from our hearts. It is a habit of the tongue, not a sentiment of the soul; and when it became only a form, the spirit of God departed from the church, and in the holy place stood

the abomination of desolation. Yet, even to you, I must appeal to such vestiges of brotherhood and sisterhood as I am bound to believe you possess, to clear me from this atrociously false accusation. For it is monstrously, utterly baseless and false. Paul could not say more truly than I, *Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.* What is laid to my charge here is something which, even to discuss, brings a sense of degradation: to answer it, is to raise it from the filth of perjury where it now lies, to a place among things possible. Yet, there are some among you," here he looked at Mrs. Tolliver, "whose minds should never willingly receive this slander. To such I make my plea.

"I knew Olive Dearwester when she was a child. Her mother and father were friends to me when I needed friends, and she was my pupil—a little child. I never heard of her from that time, nor she of me, until she came to supply our need for a singer. Mrs. Courtright—Miss Bloodgood, then—was present when I wrote the note to Mr. Dewey. There is nothing which deserves notice in the affidavits relating to my finding a boarding-place for these old friends, or calling on them—nothing which in justice to your own pure minds you should question.

"The trip on the private car was arranged by Mr. John Bloodgood. Mr. Kittrick, here, knows that his party was to come to Lattimore with us, but left the car at Hammersley. My wife was to be with us, but was called home that very morning by her mother's illness, in response to a telegram from Mr. John Bloodgood. I was carried to the train half insensible from a sudden illness. Miss Dearwester,

instead of being one of a large party of acquaintances, found herself unexpectedly in sole charge of a sick man under the influence of opiates, alone with a negro porter of whom she was afraid, in a fearful storm of thunder, lightning and cloud-burst.

"Such a situation calls, on behalf of this lonely girl, for your pity. You are a Southerner, Mrs. Tolliver, and you know how women feel toward strange and evil-looking negroes. And this man behaved in such a way as to increase this natural terror. She dared not lie down in her state-room, and when she awoke from dropping asleep in her seat, he was stooping over her. She believed that he had kissed her. I was in a stupor from morphia, but in her extremity she sat by me all night, and as I talked in my fever, she answered me to make it appear that I was able to converse, and to protect her."

Mrs. Tolliver's eyes grew moist and she made a gesture of sympathetic comprehension. Mrs. Aylesbury uttered a hard little laugh. The men shifted about uneasily. Smith was now looking at Mrs. Tolliver as if for support.

"The cloud-burst, as you all know," Mr. Courtright went on, "washed away the track in many places, and we were out two nights and a day. My illness passed away. I discovered during the day that Miss Dearwester was in deadly terror of the negro; and that night I watched, and when he behaved as if about to enter her state-room, I—I laid hands on him. In thinking of it since, I have made up my mind that I may have been wrong in this, in not seeking an explanation from the porter; but I am a man of violent impulses, and I yielded to them. I choked him

so that he might make no disturbance. This was what produced the twisted neck of which Doctor Aylesbury makes deposition. And when he drew a knife on me, I struck him, and injured his face and jaw severely. I regret—”

“Good, good! The brute!” cried Mrs. Tolliver.

“I locked him in the smoking-room,” Emerson went on, “because he had drawn a knife, and seemed dangerous. I was more sorry than I can describe, when I saw his pitiful plight next morning, because there was too little reason for laying hands on him; and I sent him with the note to Doctor Aylesbury. That is all the story: except that I believe it is true that Miss Dearwester has gone to join the Athenians Opera Company, a very respectable organization, as you all know. Now, as Christians, as merely decent men and women, can you publish these affidavits as a means of winning a church contest? It would not be done in a political campaign. It is mere assassination of the character of a good girl. It is murder of the peace of mind of a wife. It is making the house of God a den of hyenas. Will you good, ordinary, American church-members, do such a thing!”

“You did just right!” cried Mrs. Tolliver. “I always knew you were a *man*! And Miss Dearwester is perfectly lovely! I am satisfied with your explanation—perfectly!”

Mrs. Tolliver beamed upon Emerson; and, turning to her companions, was chilled by their unresponsiveness. Morgan smiled sarcastically at the thought that the only convert made by Emerson’s defense was won, not by the law of love, but by his appeal to brute force, and through an unreasoning race-prejudice. Then,

as he glanced at the others, he saw that Smith had straightened his shoulders, and, with his much-fumbled hat dropped to his side, was looking Emerson in the eye.

"Them's my sentiments," said he, indicating Mrs. Tolliver with his thumb. "It's a put-up game, Mr. Courtright, I know, since I've heerd you; and, if it costs me my job, I'm fer yeh from now on!"

Mrs. Aylesbury gasped. Revolt and mutiny were not in her plans. Dewey, his hook nose shutting down over his mouth as he set his jaw, took command.

"This committee," said he, "can't try this matter. It's for the congregation to say. If, after hearing these proofs, and what he has to say in defense and explanation, they support Mr. Courtright, well and good: but before they decide, they are entitled to a knowledge of the charge."

"I thank you, Mrs. Tolliver," said Emerson, grasping her hands. "I thank you, Mr. Smith. But you see, the powers of plutocracy will not be turned aside by mere innocence. It was always so. Members of the committee, I shall not drag a young girl's name through the mire of a sensational press, to win such a contest as this. You have won. I wish you decency enough to blush, sometime, at your victory. My next Sunday's sermon will be my farewell. I think I had better leave you to arrange the details of this sweet bargain with Mr. Yeager. He will see that, for this yielding to blackmail, I receive the immunity for myself and my family, that I purchase. Don't cry so, Mrs. Tolliver. You've had really very little to do with it: much less than you think!"

## CHAPTER XX

### HOW THE STORY GOT OUT

John Knox's daughter is said to have addressed to the throne of Scotland the asseveration that she would catch her father's head in her apron rather than have him lie, and be a bishop. Under the same circumstances, Amy Courtright might have taken a similarly stern and lofty position supporting Emerson's devotion to his sense of duty. But uncompromising people always forget that the circumstances are not now the same as in reform times in Scotland, or Geneva, or Florence, or Judea. Why, therefore, should she be called upon to catch the head of her husband, as it rolled from the guillotine he himself had set in motion? It was not dignified, she protested. None of the best people did it. Every one with whom she had hitherto been called upon to associate, had been successful. Emerson had been successful when she married him, and would have continued so, had he been willing to do as did all the best and greatest ministers of the most aristocratic churches—preach generalities, if he must touch upon disputed points at all, but confine himself mostly to questions of right living and right spiritual attitude upon which all church people are agreed.

"But, Amy, my dear," said he, "they may not see the truth, that the evils you would have me confine myself to are but symptoms, mainly, of the economic

disease: and if they do see, and suppress it, would you have me do the same? Shall I advocate the cutting out of the pustule, as a cure for the fever of smallpox which rages in the blood? Do you remember the sunken road of Ohain at Waterloo, and how the guardsmen charged into it, and filled it with their bodies, and were trampled into a highway for those coming after? I am going under—I hope for a time only—in this contest between truth and error in the First Church. But I hear behind me the thundering hoof-beats of those who shall pass over. Those who hear the trumpet must go; and I have heard it. If my body will help fill the sunken road, I give it freely, if it is required of me. Would you have me do otherwise?”

Amy sat folding over her knee a little plait in her skirt, and seemed not to have heard this.

“When must we leave the parsonage?” she asked.

“Soon,” answered Emerson; “as soon as we can get another house.”

“Have you any definite work in view, after—after—”

“After my expulsion from the First Church?”

“After you leave it?”

“Yes, and no,” answered Emerson. “There promises to be a demand on the South Side, among the railway and working-people, for my services. Many of the new members of the First Church live there. It seems like the beginning of the church I want. Then there is settlement work in Chicago. I am corresponding with some friends about that. I did not think it worth while to bother you with these worries, until they became a little more concrete, you know.”

Amy, to whom the thought of uncertainty in life, and the necessity of looking about for a place, was bitterly humiliating, rose to leave her husband's presence.

"Mama needs me very much at home," said she. "She was here this morning, and urged me to close the house, and come home. Until our affairs assume some definite form, I think we had better go."

Emerson looked up in surprise. He had not expected from Amy any great warmth of sympathy in his defeat. She was incapable of seeing the matter as he saw it, he reasoned, and was not to be blamed; and her coldness was no evidence of lack of affection for him. It was the palsy of the sympathies, which, in their adjustment to their environment, ruling and parasitic classes must acquire, or they can not continue to live upon their fellows. The barnacle must have no intelligent pity for the whale, or the pike for the gudgeon; such pity would unfit him for his life. But, in spite of these thoughts, her proposal to break up their home was astonishing to him.

"Have you considered," asked he, "the—the relations which have grown up between your father and brother, and me?"

Amy was silent for a long time.

"Have you considered," at last she asked in reply, "the position I shall be placed in; the shameful publicity of our removal, like a section hand's family on the first of May, with our goods dumped from vans before some shabby wooden house across the railway yards? Have you thought how it will be with me in such—but, of course you have not! The fancied wrongs of a mass of people who are happier



than I shall ever be again, outweigh any of the actual—oh, what does a man know of a woman's feelings!"

Emerson sat silent, the remaining walls and towers of his air-castle of loving comradeship tumbling in wreck around him, as his wife's tearful and almost involuntary utterance showed him how deep and wide was the gulf between their souls. The cause for which he would thank God and die, if by mere dying he might further it, the cause which lay on his heart night and day, the divine revolt against the immemorial servitude to penury and disease and sin, was, to her mind, even after these months of thought, a fanciful quest, which he was much to blame for pursuing, against her desire, and to the sacrifice of her personal and social ease.

He thought of Mary and her sons, "standing without" in that old time, and of him who said to the Teacher: *Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.* And of the answer: *Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father.* He wondered what Amy would think, should he quote the text, and draw its inference as to Jesus' weighing of family relations as against universal demands. Her words had chilled his heart to her; and what seemed to him the pettiness of the things she said, fought against the appeal of the pathetic mouth and the pretty, pretty face and figure, which so recently ruled his dreams and guided his steps. He knew that he ought to caress and to comfort her; but what could he say? He could only say he loved her. He could not turn his back upon the spiritual quest on which

he had entered. He could not, if he would. He would not, if he could. Such reasonings are too stern for dalliance, too grave for lip-tilting, too absorbing for studied prettiness of speech.

"Perhaps, Amy," said he, "under all the circumstances, you had better go."

It was Amy's turn, now, to look up in surprise. For a long time they had found themselves thrown into something like antagonism toward each other whenever their conversation touched upon the broadening area lying outside the fast narrowing field capable of their common occupancy. Amy's sense of injury was keen and growing, at the thought of her changed position. She had been a sort of Middle American princess, too high for the hopes of the society about her, and linked by ties of community of interest, present or prospective, with other Houses of Have, lower and higher, east and west. Now she had slipped swiftly down to the position of wife to a talented and successful preacher, and, with his failure, to complete social disappearance, if not ostracism. And he seemed incapable of conceiving the importance of these things to her. He was not sorry for her, except because of what he called her natural distress at the differences between him and her family. And now—Did he quite understand the full meaning of his, "Perhaps *you* had better go"? To her it gave terrifying glimpses of great gulfs of acknowledged estrangement. She did not answer him, and the conversation ended.

Emerson went on with his farewell sermon. His sympathies, an unfriendly critic would say, were so broad that they were thin. It would be truer to say

that he could not fully enter into his wife's feelings as to the things she was losing, deeming them as nothing himself. To live on the South Side of Lattimore, among the wooden houses, in touch with such men as Overmeyer, Hicks, Strang, Simpson and Morgan Yeager, ministering to a growing congregation of believers in the old-new Christianity—what could be finer? There must be some perverseness in Amy's attitude; a false perspective. Her father and mother and brother held him in contempt and dislike—that he knew: but, if she wished to go to them for a visit—he carried his forecast no further—she must be free to go. She must be free, always. And all the time, while these things were running through his mind, their paths were crossed and recrossed in the mental tract by other trains of ideas—protest at the diabolical (not to mention unchristian) means used by people he was forced to regard as average church-members, to tie him hand and foot, and throw him from his pulpit; pity for Olive, fleeing from the slimy slander, her maidenly shame covering her with confusion; humiliation at the necessity of surrender—and all the time, that last sermon to be prepared.

The great church, with its lecture-rooms and galleries, was crowded to the doors. Both factions were out in force, drawn by the crisis in their affairs—the decision as to whether Mr. Courtright should go or stay. The preliminary services were dull and colorless: all interest was centered in the sermon and its conclusion—the expected vote. Emerson rose with less than usual vigor of poise and movement. He looked toward his wife's seat, saw that she was

absent, and read the text which described, he said, the attitude, to-day, of both the church and the comfortable classes by which it is ruled: *Thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

Every being, he said, except man, desires only the things it is in the habit of getting; and even man is able to fix his desires feebly, only, upon blessings hitherto unenjoyed. The road-beetle's highest happiness is found in rolling its ball of filth—its riches. To it, Heaven is a dusty road, and a plentitude of ordure. The dreams of the Digger Indian are filled with feasts of roots and grasshoppers. The Eskimo's yearnings go out to igloos full of rancid whales' blubber. And the civilized man, like his savage brother, only faintly wishes for anything except success, as he sees men achieving it. Our very Heaven, like the road to our worldly hope, is paved with gold, and for most of us, its joys are in full view of souls in torment, across a great gulf—the image of modern business "success."

"Imagine," said he, "a city of huts in a tropical forest. On a tawdry throne sits a monarch, hedged about with awful penalties for the slightest violation of his claims to honor and worship. His subjects cringe before him, and study turgid and incredible flattery. His guards visit death upon any approaching him unaccredited. He is the god as well as the king of some thousands of souls. He knows, dimly, that knives and spears and bullets and poison await him everywhere. The very guard must approach him in a mode preventing his doing the tyrant harm. How

many have sworn to kill him, he knows not, but he knows that, should he leave his throne, and essay to walk alone to the next village, the jackals would be mumbling his bones to-night. He knows that pestilence and famine may destroy him with his people next season. His mind is filled with fears, and the cruelties which fears inevitably breed; and in the darkness that surrounds him, lurks every form of peril glaring out with a stare of spectral malice; and his flesh is momentarily a-creep with the wind of blows aimed at his life, and barely missing their mark.

"From our places, as citizens in a more advanced society, we look upon him with half-amused pity. Changing places with him is unthinkable. Yet he thinks himself rich, and imagines that he needs nothing; and the whole strength of his arm and army would be put forth to resist a movement to bring his state to the condition of the most advanced in the world, and to make of him an industrious and useful private citizen, safe, respected, surrounded by friends. He would fight it to the death, as a plan for ruining him and his posterity."

Mr. Courtright paused, and looked over the congregation of this Christian church. The faces of the "successful" people in it were, almost without exception, cold and unresponsive, as would have been that of the savage king listening to the proposal of civilization. His wife's seat was still vacant—crowning proof of her failure to feel the lift of his aspirations.

*"The light of the body is the eye,"* he exclaimed "and the church should be the eye of the body politic and its light. Everywhere are the imperfections, the

dark corners, of human life. We must be content, that dark things shall still be dark. But, *if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness, and how hopeless!* If I might only once see the church of God taking a position higher than that of the savage tyrant, I would say, *Let thy servant depart in peace!* But what do we see? Her comfortable and well-fed people shut their eyes to the horrid things about them, or tolerate them as necessities, laying them to God, looking only at the ring of safety about their thrones. The jungles of the forest of modern business are full of great man-eating beasts, lying in wait for human prey. The miasma of the slum threatens every home with social and moral pestilence. The madness of despair and luxury riots in saloon and buffet and gambling-house and bordel, and into the whirl of the orgy are sucked the sons and daughters of the 'safe' occupants of these home-thrones, one by one. Yet the church only looks about for strait-jackets of legal restriction: the cure, by the elimination of poverty and luxury, she sneers at and spits upon. Yet not one home is safe, not one.

"And back in the sinister forests of our great population, are more daunting apparitions still. The great man-eating beasts of 'big business' have made millions landless, homeless, workless and businessless, and are fast making them, by example and oppression, conscienceless also. The victims in increasing hordes drift aimlessly about from farm to farm, from city to city. They bury themselves in the slime of kennel and slum. They are those whose eyes glare hungrily, as the House of Want gazes gauntly across the gulf at the House of Have, the one growing larger and

hungrier, the other smaller and more madly lavish—until finally the one sweeps across at the other, and in the ferocity born of ignorance and blind hate, the precious things of the soul and the spirit, which even now it was not too late to save, are torn down and trampled into the bloody dust of falling civilization!

“Oh, First Church of Lattimore, like Laodicea, thou sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing, and like her, thou art the wretched one, and miserable and poor and blind and naked!

“Ye shopkeepers, the time comes when you will keep shops for the great man-eating beasts of the jungle of business, and will tremble for your employment.

“Ye bankers, these great beasts are lying in wait for you by the fountains of legislation, and your day of free and independent life is short, and you shall become clerks.

“Ye manufacturers, the highways belong to your competitors, and soon ye shall meet failure, or be eaten by the lions of the roads. Your days are numbered, and you are fated to be put down from your petty thrones, and to join the hordes who look across at their despoilers.

“Already you of the church have lost the Christian’s love for your fellow-men. Your false pity goes afar across the seas to those from whose poverty your riches are not drawn, or you drop alms to those who would need none were they free. But you close your hearts to the cries of your own victims for their rights under high Heaven, and lay their wrongs to themselves and to God. And all the time the vitriol sea of wealth-concentration is eating up the very ship on which you

sail, and it must go down, and carry down in hopeless shipwreck you or your children; unless you buy the gold of unselfishness and fraternity of that Jesus who is the founder of your religion, that you may become truly rich, in a regenerated state, in which alone a regenerated church is possible.

“You accuse me of causing strife and division here. Not I, but the truth, causes it. There is peace in this church compared with what shall very soon come to every church in Christendom. Formalism, Pharisaism, churchianity, must give way to Christianity, and every church will soon be rent by a strife as much more widespread than that of Luther, as the economic problem is broader than that of papal indulgences. It may be that the church organizations are not worth saving; that their great members control them as unshakably as they control the other branches of their corporations. But Christ will none the less visit the poor and sick, and in His good time take the government upon His shoulders. Temples like this, standing as crumbling shelters of decayed ecclesiasticism, may yet see a churchless Christianity go on to the conquest of the world from the sin which makes poverty and the poverty which makes sin. The poor priests of Wyclif’s day preached, by hedges and on village greens, the Christ with whom they were shut out of the churches. Such things must come when Mammon owns the altars. When the temples will not hear the gospel of love and of government by love, then the street-corner and the open field become consecrated—and, if necessary, to such rostrums I go from this pulpit. And I go because I have been true to my fellow-men, and, therefore, true to Jesus!”



In such manner he led up to the announcement of his resignation; but in spite of his gradual approach to it, the shock was terrible. When he dismissed them with his last fervent benediction, the people who were there to support him crowded about him, protesting, with a vehemence bordering on anger. To them all he gave only one answer—he had reasons which he could not give them, which made it impossible for him to remain. They clung to him in entreaty to do this impossibility. Women wept as they wrung his hand, men's protests were choked in dry sobs—and at the other end of the church stood Feek, with a reporter for the *Times*, both seeking to catch the eye of Mrs. Aylesbury, who stood about half-way down the church toward Emerson and his knot of sorrowful friends. The woman had a strange look of set and malevolent purpose, as she moved toward the expelled minister in obedience to a nod from Feek. Watson the reporter went forward swiftly, and Mrs. Aylesbury skirted the edge of the group about Emerson, looking with a smile of malicious triumph into the tearful faces of the women, one after another. At last, in the wife of Overmeyer, she found the one she sought—one whose spirit could not brook this vaunting.

“Yes, grin!” cried Mrs. Overmeyer, as Sister Aylesbury smiled meaningly into her face. “You may well do it, after you and your crowd have drove out the best and purest man that ever stood in a pulpit!”

“Don't say that to me!” retorted Mrs. Aylesbury in seeming excitement. “Don't say that to me, Sister Overmeyer; I won't stand it! If you think he's the best and purest, ask him if his giving up has anything to do with the running away of his soprano! Ask

who brought her here. Ask him who was with him two nights and a day on the special car. Ask him why he beat the porter of the car into insensibility, and locked the door of the car against him! Ask him—but I may go too far. But don't talk to me, Sister Overmeyer, about your 'best and purest'; I know too much!"

Mrs. Overmeyer was about to make some bitter retort, when Mrs. Aylesbury hurried away. The group about Emerson scarcely heard the colloquy, and failed entirely to understand it. Watson, however, now that something public had occurred to make the thing "news," stepped forward, halted the retreating Mrs. Aylesbury, sought interviews, consulted the affidavits Feek had given him; and, in the morning, the claim agent smiled over his coffee, as he read the display heads telling of a preacher's fall by an actress' allurements, and congratulated himself on having earned the approval of the Old Man. The fact that it had been done in violation of the ordinary rules of civilized warfare, and against the sanctity of the solemn agreement of capitulation, did not occur to Mr. Feek except as an element of enhancement in his side of the account. He was used to perfidy and perjury as regular features of his employment.

And Emerson Courtright, tossing sleeplessly until morning, was awakened out of his first fitful and uneasy slumber by the rustling of a newspaper, as Amy entered the room holding the *Times* crushed in her trembling hands, her face pale with the ecstasy of a woman's passion.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE QUEEN COMES BACK TO HER OWN

Mr. Morgan Yeager entered the great, shabby, palpitating, vibrant room occupied in chaotic disorder by the young men who were engaged in making the *Chicago Observer*, with the careless mien which is presumptive evidence of his being accustomed to it—evidence of the same order as that adduced as to his habits by the petrel, when he plays on the edge of the combing breakers. The working-room of the *Observer* had something of the tempest in it—a tempest made up of clicks, bell-rings, telephone-calls, telegraphic dots and dashes, electric buzzers, hurrying feet, the hum of voices, and a ground-swell of rumble and quiver from machinery. Into this inferno Mr. Yeager passed calmly, and went into the den occupied by the managing editor, a little dark man with a prognathous jaw, who was just shunting Mr. Yeager's predecessor out on the other side of the room as Morgan entered.

"Good morning, Yeager," said the managing editor, laying his hand accurately on some manuscript in a mass of papers on his desk, and scanning it closely as he spoke. "This is good stuff. Are you quite sure of your facts?"

"We have affidavits for them all, I believe," answered Morgan, "if that makes them any surer."

"It seems to put the last and most desired crimp in our friends of the milk trust," went on the managing editor; "but, I say, Yeager, can't you put a little more human interest in it?"

"I thought the mere facts had some human interest," replied Morgan; "but I know what you mean—woman stuff—yes. How would it do to show that the trust was really formed to raise the daughter of its president to a social parity with the son of the Ahkoond of Swat, and that Central Asia is in revolution on account of it?"

"Good!" laughed the M. E. "With pictures of the Ahkoond's palace, and old Kauffmann's daughter in the costume of queen of his harem! But seriously now, you know, eh?"

"Yes," said Yeager, "I have some of the stuff you mean—good illustrative matter—and if you'll give me some cubs to hunt photographs, and a camera-man—I want the pictures before I do the last of the writing, if I can get them: but I can't cut out all the facts, or what becomes of the exposé?"

"Oh, you'll hit it off all right," said the editor. "The people are reading your stories—even the academic parts. Anything more?"

"Yes," said Mr. Yeager; "I want an assignment to interview Miss Dearwester—Olive Dearwester, the operatic star, you know."

"What's that!" exclaimed the M. E. "Yeager, the trust sleuth, condescending to toy with the gay and festive Olive? My dear fellow, you'd better switch drinks, hadn't you? Are you smitten? Well, that's a perfectly stale and insufficient reason for asking an assignment that every man on the force, young and

old—almost—has begged for on quite similar grounds if they'd tell the truth."

Mr. Yeager, "the trust sleuth," winced a little, and reddened under that old coat of tan.

"My reason is rather different," said he carelessly. "It's all right, though, if the assignment isn't convenient. Only I had a curiosity to meet her again."

"Again? Then you've met her?"

"Rather," answered Mr. Yeager. "I knew her a little girl in a district school, and again when she sang in a church choir. Oh, yes, I knew her quite well!"

"The deuce you did! Well, then, you can give us some reminiscences, can't you? Why, confound it man," went on the managing editor, "you can give us the real facts as to her parentage; whether she's the daughter of a Mohammedan sheik; or the fruit of a morganatic marriage of an Austrian prince with a Hindu lady—or what. It isn't in my sphere of influence, but I know Jones would like to score on the other fellows in this matter."

"I can set history straight," said Morgan, "with Miss Dearwester's permission—not otherwise."

"You're determined to see her," observed the editor. "Well, then, why don't you call?"

"I want an excuse to call," answered Morgan. "And I may be able to give Jones some good stuff. You see, after an old acquaintance has gone up like a varicolored rocket, and has all the world in leash, and is reported disdainful and gushing, and a lot of other contradictory things, a fellow doesn't care to presume. But as the representative of the *Shriek*, as our contemporaries call us—"

"I see," said the editor. "Well, I'll suggest to Jones that he divide it between you and Miss Billings. And get her release on the school-days stuff, if you're so super-scrupulous as to think it necessary. Have your trust matter in early. Hello, Slade, come in. What's become of your water-steal story? Good day, Yeager, and good luck and a whole heart! Give us all the stuff you can."

Morgan Yeager, quite assimilated in appearance to the average of Chicagoans, walked down the street, still with the air of one familiar with his surroundings. A fellow-journalist overtook him, and asked if he was going to the Press Club for luncheon.

"Not now," answered Morgan. "I've just breakfasted."

Down in the midst of the high buildings on Dearborn Street he stopped and took another look at the posters in the rear of the Fisher Building which, heralding a long-expected musical event, had set Chicago's world of music and art a-quiver with excitement, and tied to the box-office window long queues of ticket-buyers—the posters which announced that "Mr. Algernon Brayton presents Miss Olive Dearwester and her company of artists, in *The Queen of Atlantis*." From smaller bills on every available space in the city, looked forth the portraits of the star. Some showed her in the magnificent costumes of the "Queen," some in characteristic poses and other dress, some gave just the oval face—and the deep, dark eyes looked out in friendly greeting from them all. Men and women occasionally stopped in the crowded street for a look into those magic eyes. Morgan had often done so, as he now did; and as he had done before,

he passed on with the thought, "I believe she's the same Olive, in spite of the stories."

But Morgan was a prejudiced juror. The stories were many. If one could believe them, there was ground for the managing editor's use of the hackneyed words "gay and festive." Miss Dearwest they said, while regal, or simple, or *triste*, or debonnaire, or nun or bacchante, as the piece required on the stage, in her hours of ease was doing the *allegro* movement in life's sonata, somewhat disregarding of the *ma non troppo* of the admonitory forefinger shaken by Piousdence—or prude, as you may look at the matter. Of course, Morgan thought, no one can tell about the flying rumors of the reporter and the advance agent. The tales of her motoring, her dogs and horses, her lavish spending of money, her tyranny over her manager (who was universally listed among her adorers), her dizzy little midnight banquets, her conquests of princes, dukes, artists and dignitaries in European capitals: all these might be as well founded on fact as those of her Mohammedan parentage, or her Hindu religion. Her generosity, her helpfulness to young singers, her magnanimity toward the members of her company, and their devotion to her; and the abandon with which she flung herself into whatever rôle she took—these, he felt, must be true reports; for they disclosed the Olive of old, the little girl whose ears could hear the music from her paper keyboard, whose songs charmed to silence the rude pupils of the frontier, who threw herself between a ragged waif and an unjust punishment, and who brought crowds to the altar at revivals.

"I'll stake my life she's as good as she ever was!"

said he to himself, glowing at the recollection of her goodness and charm. Perhaps some of the glow went with his card, for almost at once he was shown up—up in the elevator, and down a hall to a spacious parlor from whose windows he could see the blue waters of Lake Michigan rippling against the breakwater. Hearing a footstep, he turned to meet Olive, and was face to face with a handsome, clean-shaven man, who came forward with an ingratiating smile.

"Mr. Yeager of the *Observer*, I believe," said he. "I'm Mr. Brayton, Mademoiselle Dearwester's manager. Glad to meet you."

"Thank you," said Morgan. "Miss Dearwester's manager would be of interest to the readers of the *Observer*, even though he were a less-known personage than Mr. Algernon Brayton. I hope your star is as well this morning as you seem to be, Mr. Brayton?"

"Shining as effulgently as ever, Mr. Yeager, and glad to see a representative of the *Observer* as soon as she is at liberty, which will be in a very short time. Miss Dearwester's time—the time of the world's very greatest singer, as I think—is mortgaged and disposed of to an incredible degree; but she will give you a few moments. Naturally, we are anxious to have her first appearance here since the conquest of her queenship, if I may so express myself, as thoroughly as possible brought to public notice. Have you been doing the theaters for the *Observer* long?"

Morgan was obliged to admit that he had not; but that this first interview had been assigned to him for special reasons. Their regular musical critic, Miss Billings, would handle the opera that evening. Mr.



Brayton sat in negligent attitudes smoking the ti off fine cigars and descanting upon Miss Dearwestern European and New York successes. Royalty had dined and wined her. The musical world had set the stamp of its highest approval on her art. The art world had gone wild over her beauty. She was America's greatest glory in the realm of song. McGan asked questions, made notes—and waited, listening to Mr. Brayton's impresario's patter as to the babbling of a brook.

At last a pretty, be-capped and be-ribboned maid entered, and confided to him that Mademoiselle Dearwestaire would be delight' now to receive Monsieur Yégaire. M. Yégaire followed her, his pulse beating deafeningly in his ears, and refusing to believe that this was real. These formalities could not be the prelude to his meeting with little Olive, whose memo at that moment insisted upon sticking from under the desk slender legs covered with red woolen stockings. As he noted the heavy shoes on the feet of this phantasm, and that they had just been greased so as to keep out the snow-water, M. Yégaire noted with a start that he was passing through room after room, each more lovely, more elegant and intimately homelike than the last, to where, like a peri in an enchanted cave, some bright being masquerading under the name of his old friend awaited him.

Would she still give the least bit of weight to the old life and the old liking? Had she been utterly weaned from such men as he by the adulation and elegant attentions of such as Brayton? Could a young woman pass through the fire of such triumphs, such an artificial world, untainted by its smoke and

soot, unscorched by its fires? He wished he had not come. To be received upon the same terms as those accorded to these new acquaintances (of whom he was unconsciously and foolishly condemnatory and jealous), who cared only for her beauty, her song, and the money she made for them—that would be worse than to be turned away unseen. Quite in a panic, therefore, was Morgan, when he was left in a tapestried *Petit Trianon* parlor where he waited, looking out upon the lake again, too agitated to note that the room was worth a stickful of description for the *Observer*. A silken rustle, a soft, swift footfall, and she entered, radiant, smiling, stately, her every motion and expression instinct with courtly grace.

“Pardon this too long waiting, Mr. Yeager,” she began, and then stopped, her eyes widening with surprise, the courteous smile disappearing, a flood of friendly recognition taking its place.

“Why, *Morgan!*” she cried, the rich voice ringing through the little room. “You dear, dear old fellow! I never thought of its being you! Sit down and tell me where you’ve been all these years. I’m so glad to see you, I—I could cry!”

“I’ve been waiting,” said Morgan.

Miss Dearwester looked curiously at him a moment, and laughed, as she held his hands and led him to a tête-à-tête, on which she seated him beside her.

“I call that just shabby of you!” said she. “When you know I’d have come running down with my hair about my shoulders if I had known!”

“I wish you had known,” said Morgan, looking at the black pile for which her head seemed to give scant room.

She poured forth a flood of questions, which he answered in kind. How much better he looked than she had ever seen him before! She had wept over the thought of his sleeping in hayricks and riding on brake-beams so much, and now he robbed her of her pet sorrow by this grossly prosperous look of his! Had he really given up vagrancy? And who was looking after the proletariat? Was he married? Well, why not? But she was glad he was not: marriage would be the last step to bring him into the *bourgeoisie* in hopeless reform.

In ten minutes she had learned of his book, *The Incidence of Taxation*, and how it had been republished in London, and had made him some reputation.

"I know by the guilty look you have in saying that, that you've become famous!" said she. "Did it make you a fortune?"

"Almost enough came in in the way of royalties," said he, "to pay the charges of the clipping bureau."

Then she wanted to know what the clippings said of the book, and laughed at his paucity of financial returns, as if it were the best joke in the world.

"Of course," she remarked, "you'll have to write more books before you become rich as well as famous."

"I guess so," answered Morgan. "But tell me about yourself. It must be an interesting story, this climb from the chorus of the Athenians to the position of the 'starred goddess of song'!"

"Oh, there's nothing to it at all," she exclaimed. "Dear old Mr. McAndrew just pushed me and pushed me forward. And see the years it's taken! It wasn't very long before I might have been the Athenians' leading woman; but I asked him his real heart-to-

heart advice, and he said, to be candid, that I wasn't ready for that; and we saved and saved, and schemed and schemed, and he got me all sorts of favors, and loaned me money, and so I went to Munich and Leipzig and Paris, and put on the veneer; and all the while time was engaged in flying. I could sing just as well when I left Mr. McAndrew as I can now. I worked so hard and schemed so villainously, that my mind got set in a little hard groove, and I was bitter and mean and tired—but never quite so much so as the year after I left—that town!”

Morgan nodded comprehendingly. He knew why she could not mention Lattimore.

“But now,” she added, with a little chromatic laugh, “I'm trying to make the old world pay me back ten smiles for every frown. Maybe they're a little forced sometimes; but I get 'em. There was just one thing which lightened up the gloom—two, rather,” she went on. “One was dear Mr. McAndrew's chivalric treatment, after—after the newspapers came out. He had all the papers clipped, a sort of *minus* clipping bureau—oh, Morgan, how could they!—so I wouldn't see it. And he discharged a contralto who told me of it—and then took her back, of course. If it hadn't been for him and his wife, and the spirit they breathed into the motley crew of Athenians, I never should—”

She was silent for a moment, and seemed to be reliving it all again. Her face, trained to the expression of emotion, grew so tragic that Morgan was astonished at its poignant sorrow. Then the cloud lifted, lifted completely, and a mischievous smile rippled over the transformed countenance.

“The other ray of light—I wonder if you could

guess what it was?" she said. "It was the memory of a stocky, brown-eyed fellow with specks of gray in his hair—it hasn't grayed a bit more—standing on a railway platform, and smiting to earth a tall man who rolled in a cloud of disgrace and cinders and soft-coal smoke across the track. That was a mighty sweet memory, Morgan, to an unregenerate heart, and there was a spangled, trunked and chiffoned chorus girl that it did a world of good to!"

Morgan laughed heartily.

"Oh, how he hated me!" said he. "And finally—but go on with this story of your apotheosis. I want to know it all."

"Don't make fun of me, Morgan," said she. "I don't see that there's anything much in it. Leipsic and Munich and Paris and Vienna and London—they're just places where houses are thick, and people are crowded into them like New York and Chicago. And singing there is just the same thing as in the old school-house, or in the rink at Angus Falls. I've just sung, that's all. I was the happiest I've ever been, I think, to be able to send dear old Mr. McAndrew's widow every cent she'd take, in partial payment of what he loaned me, at a time when she needed it—I didn't think they'd ever be so mean as to keep account of it, and make me stop when I had it paid! Do you know, Morgan, it seems funny, now, to think of the old times when money seemed so much like a fable—it's wicked, the thousands I get every week, for doing what I love to do; and so many girls get so little for doing the things they hate!"

Morgan nodded again, and was silent. He was a good conversationalist.

"How much of this—and of your childhood—may I give to the *Observer*?" he asked at last.

"As you will put it," said she, "I give you *carte blanche*. But it won't do any good to the cause of truth; the Hindu and gipsy stories will be still believed—or maybe I shouldn't allow you to tell the truth."

A message from Mr. Brayton saying that the reception-room was full of people to whom interviews had been promised. Miss Dearwester's reply that they might wait—she was engaged. Mr. Brayton's penciled rejoinder that, begging pardon, some of 'em couldn't wait. Miss Dearwester's surrejoinder that they might go, then. And all the time, she was pouring out her reserves of long-withheld confidences upon Morgan Yeager, who was giving back his own; in a trance dominated by the fairy vision of a woman he had never been able to imagine, much as he had loved her. For, be it remembered, Morgan had met Olive little since the old days on the prairie.

She was scarcely changed from the Lattimore time, save that there was more of the Juno and less of the Psyche in her form, and her bearing was much more impressive—one might almost say imposing—than of yore. She was clearly a woman of the world, now, and one whose illusions, Morgan thought, were gone, whose gaze fell unshrinkingly upon the realities of life. While he was so reflecting, she abruptly opened the subject both had avoided hitherto.

"What ever became of Emerson Courtright?" she asked. "And where is he now?"

"Well," answered Morgan apologetically, "I'm ashamed to say I don't know. You see, I only stayed in Lattimore for a short time after you went away.

The Bloodgood influence got me discharged. Emerson was broken-hearted at the perfidy of the people who got his resignation on their promise to protect your good name, and—”

“My good name?” she interposed.

“Yes,” answered Morgan. “Didn’t you know? It was that, really, that made him surrender.”

Olive looked at him queerly for a moment.

“Surrender?” she exclaimed interrogatively. “Surrender! Wasn’t the vote taken? Wasn’t the result against him? Wasn’t he—”

“No, he wasn’t defeated,” replied Morgan. “He could have won. But the committee came to him with affidavits—you know what was in them?”

“Yes,” said she—and again the blood pulsed in a crimson tide to her cheeks, as in the long ago when the same dark slander first reached its mark in her mind.

“Pardon me!” said Morgan.

“It’s all right,” she answered; “go on, please.”

“Well,” he continued, “when he saw the affidavits—he and I—we saw at once that he must give up.”

“It was noble of you both,” she said. “But I wish you’d fought it through! And then?”

“Watson, the *Times* man, is on one of the Chicago papers, and he’s told me how Feek put up a job to have the doctor’s wife, Mrs. Aylesbury, make a scene in the church, so as to make news of it—and thus they got his surrender, and still assassinated him.”

“That Aylesbury cat!” hissed Olive. “Go on, please!”

“I was there long enough to know that Emerson’s wife gave him a certain measure of support in his

trouble, and publicly denounced the story as a slander; but she didn't sympathize with his views; and though she went with him over on the South Side, where he and a few of his adherents set up a church, I don't believe she was of much assistance to him. He was there when I left, and seemed to be doing pretty well, had big congregations in a lodge hall, and was hopeful. He was a sort of official lecturer for the A. R. U.—a great labor union, you remember. I tried to show him that the unions were not even trying to accomplish anything basic; but he said they were the only leaven of aspiration in the great labor lump, and he was going to stay by them, and he did."

"I can see how he might think that," said Olive. "Probably he was right. But wasn't it the A. R. U. that struck, and kept us tied up between Terre Haute and Fort Wayne for days and days, in hot weather? They acted awfully nasty! But go on, please."

"I don't know much more," said Morgan. "He got his name into a Federal injunction, as a dangerous man—"

"Emerson Courtright a dangerous man!" ejaculated Olive. "But no one would believe that; so it couldn't hurt him."

"It couldn't?" replied Morgan. "Many a man as innocent as he went to prison. From the standpoint of the thrones and synagogues, any one who preaches justice is dangerous. I guess that he was kept out of jail by the fact that Judge Bloodgood, who issued the injunction, didn't like the idea of being advertised as the judge who sent his daughter's husband to prison. All this time I was cut off from communication with him by my own affairs, and, in fact, was



not worrying about him, because he was doing so well when I came away, and I had always thought him a man of some means. It seems, though, from information which I have from various sources, that the strike broke up his church, and that at the close of it, his principal supporters were either in jail for violating injunctions, of which they had hardly heard, or out of work, and blacklisted so that they couldn't get work. He tried lecturing, but the churches wouldn't have him, and the labor unions were cowed and frightened by the extermination of the A. R. U. It seems that he had sold his land in Kansas, and used the money to keep his church going after the strike. At last, I believe, he was driven by need to seek a place again among the regular clergy, and went from one small town to another supplying vacancies, and filling charges, but always finding the work only temporary. It must have been his economic views, or his record at Lattimore, which destroyed his chances—something did, anyhow. When I heard these things, I tried to find him, but he was lost."

"Lost!" she repeated tragically. "Lost! Lost! My God, what a slow crucifixion! I can see him now, pleading as no one else did, for the reign of love, and always finding excuses for the people who struck at and buffeted him, always showing how it was not really their fault—taking their blows as mildly as if they were caresses. And what a fighter he had it in him to be, too! Why, Morgan, he's the only man I ever saw whose conception of love was anything more than a phase of selfishness. And when I think of the beasts who pass for men—yes, and for liberal, unselfish men, too! And he lost! There isn't anything

a woman can say that is strong enough— Well, tell me more. How did his wife take these misfortunes?”

“I couldn’t learn,” answered Morgan. “Only, that none of the church positions which he held from time to time was thought to be permanent enough to justify her in going to him. So she stayed with her parents. Of course there were all sorts of rumors about a separation—and—all those matters, but nothing definite, at my last accounts.”

“A very prudent lady!” cried Olive bitterly. “She never loved him; never in the world! She only loved herself, or she wouldn’t have gone back to luxury and left him without a place to lay his head. Haven’t you *any* idea as to how he is living, or where?”

Morgan was dimly aware of the injustice to Amy in this speech, and the light it threw upon the gulf between Olive’s nature and hers. Amy had loved Emerson fondly. She would have stood by him heroically through any struggle, the reason of which she had had an adequate conception. Calumny she could understand, and she refused to be swayed from her allegiance by any charge which she felt to be false. Had the old Inquisition been revived to put her husband to the torture for theological heresy, Amy would doubtless have supported him to the death. But Emerson’s course was outside her sympathies. The conventional school in which she had been educated; the wealth-worshipping home in which she had been reared; the wealth-dominated church which embodied her conventional religion—all these were barriers between her and communion with her husband. Everything he did was to her so unheroic and out of taste. She could see in the life and death of a John

Rogers or a Cranmer those features which call upon the imagination and fire the spirit. To such a husband, she could have clung through fire and torture—and even poverty, perhaps, though that would have been harder. But this uncalled-for battle with the forces of good order—it gradually robbed Emerson of her respect, as if he had gone out on an apostolate to save the souls of animals or plants, and chosen to live with swine as a missionary. These things Morgan felt, but refrained from any attempt to explain them to Olive. What was the use? he thought. Olive was as far from a comprehension of Amy's limitations, as Amy was from sympathy with her husband.

"I saw Giddings here once," said he at last, "and he said that in legal circles in Lattimore it was whispered that the Bloodgoods were trying to find out his whereabouts, and that he had been last heard of in Chicago, or on his way here. But his name isn't in the directory, and I haven't heard of him."

"If it hadn't been for him, Morgan, where would we have been? I should have been married to some frontier nobody and lived on a cattle ranch sealed up from the world, or in a dugout, maybe. You'd have remained a farm-hand, and had no conception of anything higher than a school-house debate, or a country dance, with an election to the office of sheriff after a while. He brought us the light that has made us what we are—and not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoe. And we've gone up by the most selfish of selfish striving—or anyhow, I have: I don't blame you so much, Morgan; maybe you're all right. And here we are, comfortable, and he, abandoned by his wife and by the people for whom he gave up his

career, is adrift in a sea of misery, for teaching Christianity! I don't blame you, Morgan, for losing sight of him, not really: but if you weren't bound to keep in touch with him, who was? It's like losing a friend overboard! I'll not see anybody, ma," this to her mother, who, white-haired and elegantly gowned, came into the room: "neither you nor Mr. Brayton can make me! Here's Morgan Yeager, and we've been talking over old times until I'm all broken up. Keep Morgan to dinner, or have him come back. And don't any one speak to me till it's time to dress. Morgan Yeager, don't you dare fail me at dinner!"

## CHAPTER XXII

### "UNA VOCE POCO FA"

"Do you know where you are going?" asked Morgan Yeager.

"Only in a general way," returned Olive, "I expect you to know things. Why do I bother to take you, otherwise? It's a respectable place, isn't it?"

"Eminently so," replied Morgan. "It's the home of Mr. Hess, president of the Halliday Railway System."

Olive had been explaining to Morgan that, tempted by a most extraordinary offer, she had consented to sing at a great house, as the unique feature of some critically important social function. Mr. Brayton had opposed it, she added, and she had felt, from some of the things he had said, that it was necessary to take Brayton down a peg. At her summons Morgan had come to act as her escort. He found himself becoming more and more useful to the great Dearwester, since that day when he had been the rock on which the tide of her visitors had broken for those epochal hours during which edition after edition of the afternoon papers had gone to press bare of interviews with the great beauty, and from which he had emerged a man of mark, with his picture in the saffron journals as the distinguished author of *The Incidence of Taxation* whose devotion to the creator of the title rôle of *The Queen of Atlantis* was one

of the delicious bits of gossip, and so on. He was permitted to make of himself a sort of silent, light-running dumb-waiter and bundle-carrier, a *valet de place*, a confidential adviser whose advice was quite likely to be scorned, and a companion at convenient times.

Olive received with no apparent interest his information as to her destination.

"I thought," she replied, "that it was a soap-boiler, or pork-packer, or something of the sort—a railway president may be an improvement. There is something of dignity about a railway official. Over in Germany, they wear the most *gorgeous* uniforms, and I believe they run you through with their swords if you jostle them. Is there some mystery about this Mr. Hess? I never heard of him, I'm sure."

"He's the father of Mrs. Mildred Hess-Alleyne," replied Morgan impressively.

Unavailingly Olive searched her memory.

"It's probably very stupid in me," she answered, "but I really don't call Mrs. Hess-Alleyne to mind. Was it something so *very* disgraceful? And how does it affect her father, anyhow?"

Morgan laughed at the approximation to the mark attained by this chance shot.

"Not at all," he answered, "except that General Hess is a widower, and that she will probably be your hostess. She is Mrs. John Bloodgood, now."

"Do you mean—?" began Olive. "Is it possible? How could they dare to ask me!"

"I don't suppose," replied Morgan, "that Mr. Bloodgood has ever given them an account of his former acquaintance with you. And I fancy that he

doesn't know much about the general's arrangements. They undoubtedly think you the daughter of the Mohammedan sheik, and will be surprised to hear you talk in as good English as your European sojourn has left at your command. I really don't see—"

"Do you suppose," said Olive, "that he will be there?"

"Quite likely," replied Morgan. "Gossip tells of an estrangement between his wife and him, and of Mr. Bloodgood's fondness for the society of other and fresher beauties. But he is steadily rising in the Halliday System, and I should think him likely to pay honor by his presence to General Hess' reception. Can you remain away, after—"

"*Can* I?" queried Olive scornfully. "That isn't the question. Do I want to go? I haven't had a new sensation—excepting the pleasure of your grumpy society—for ages. I shall obtain a thrill by going to this reception. I have more than half a mind—Morgan, we'll go!"

"Have you thought," answered Morgan, "—of course it's of no consequence—but have you thought of what might happen if Mr. Bloodgood should remember the rather exciting events of his brief acquaintance with me?"

Olive sat with her hands clasped around one knee, leaning back and looking quizzically at Morgan. She was sitting at the piano, where she had been improvising in her old way, while Morgan stood near the center of the room, filling his soul with the delight of the half-profile, the billowy midnight of the hair, the creamy whiteness of the cheek and neck, the flexile wrists and arms and fingers. He had not

permitted himself to think upon this momentous renewal of their relations. He had merely gone about his daily work in a mechanical sort of way, doing his task well, but in a dream. He lived only while with her, or while sitting solitary and thinking of her. What would come of it never entered his conscious thought. Back in his being somewhere was the feeling that the consequence must be momentous. He was to be made extremely happy, said this feeling, or he was to be destroyed. In either case, he was utterly happy that she had come back to him, like a glorious and gorgeous-winged being of which the little girl in the red woolen stockings had been only the chrysalis. And all the while, he came and went as impassive as an Indian, disdainful of the wild adulation to which her new life had accustomed her, disdainful of the embellishments of conversation and the ornamentations of social life with which her intercourse with her world was filled. He was the self-contained Morgan of old, with the roughnesses of behavior worn off by his attrition with the world of journalists and writers into which he had pierced: like a Doric column, quite correct and presentable, and even admirable, in a severe and repressed way, but distinctly lacking in graces, however much of grace he might have. Something of this was in Olive's mind as, sitting with her knee slung up into her clasped hands, she looked quizzically at him, and called him grumpy. At his quite matter-of-fact way of alluding to the only meeting he had ever had with Mr. Bloodgood she laughed, in the chromatic scale which gave the sound a character of its own.

"That would add to the thrill," she replied. "Oh,



Morgan, don't you desert me! He won't remember your face, of course; and he won't hear your name. If he does, he won't suspect that it's you; and if he does know you, what can he do? And, oh the deliciousness of wondering if you're going to be detected! Come, Morgan, be a brave man—I want to see what sort of woman he sold himself to!”

“Oh, certainly, if you wish it!” replied Morgan. “I'm not going as a guest, anyhow. There's no question of abusing hospitality with me. I am entirely at your service!”

“There's a good fellow!” answered Olive, patting his hand. “And now I'm going into the hands of maids, and a lot of beauty people, into whose secrets I am not going to admit you by even a hint. Look in on mommie a little while before you go, Morgan; but, for mercy's sake, don't tell her who this Hess person is. She always sides with Mr. Brayton—on matters of policy, you know, like this singing at a social function—and if she knew I was likely to come within a mile of John Bloodgood, she'd forbid me. I'll excuse you now, Morgan. Be ready at the stroke of midnight to join your robber queen in an incursion into the enemy's country! It's going to be the lark of a lifetime!”

She vanished like a vision, her finger on her lips in mock secrecy. Morgan stood for a few moments looking at the swaying curtains which told of her exit, and went away without paying Mrs. Dearwester the visit of which her daughter had spoken. He did not care to subject the gold of his dreams to the acid of the elder lady's conversation. It might be only the fairy gold of dead leaves and dry petals, after

all. In fact, there were a thousand chances to one, said his judgment, against such a thing as there being an aureate atom in the whole bewildering mixture of gleam and gloom, too chaotic and dubious even for the strong-box of a castle in Spain.

The Hess reception and ball was a function built on broad lines, and adjusted to certain large social factors. Mildred Hess-Alleyne-Bloodgood, as all her enemies called her, ignoring the modest “Mrs. John Bloodgood” on her cards, had laid it out on a scale of magnificence the very might of which was to overcome the last trace of stubbornness on the part of those who had the lack of grace to remember those London stories of the days of Captain Alleyne. It was not likely that her husband, the wayward Jack, would be offered any confidences relating to her plans, or have the patience to listen to them if offered. It was not likely that Mrs. Bloodgood would know of the identity of Dearwester the diva with a certain Lattimore choir soprano, of whom Mrs. Bloodgood may be assumed to have had a minimum of knowledge. It was hardly to be expected that Mrs. Courtright, the wayward Jack’s unfortunate sister, would know anything of the triumph, so secretly contrived, by which Mrs. Bloodgood expected to bring to a close her campaign for complete social rehabilitation, among other things, by placing the Hess mansion in the list of royal and princely and ducal palaces in which the Queen of Song had deigned to transmute the silver of her voice into gold. No doubt, Mrs. Courtright could have told Mrs. Bloodgood a thing or two concerning Dearwester, and her relations with the Bloodgood family, had Amy known anything of her sister-in-

law's plans, and been minded to unbosom herself. But she had arrived in Chicago that very morning, and had gone with her little daughter to the Hess mansion, in which lived her brother as a part of the Hess family, and she had been absorbed into its immensity like a swallow into a cliff.

"Amy, dear," Mrs. Bloodgood had said, "it's so lovely of you to come in time for the reception. So foolish of you to have lived so long in retirement—and the time coming on when you will have to come out again for little Mildred's sake. But you'll excuse me from paying any attention to you until it's all over, won't you? Just tell me if your suite is not habitable, and if there's anything we can do to make the dear child's nursery any more tolerable, and—yes, Jones; tell the caterer to wait a *moment!*"

One sees from these circumstances that there was very little chance for Mrs. Bloodgood to know beforehand, that Dearwester was "the actress," as she would have put it, "who had broken up poor Amy's home"—if she took the trouble to remember the unfrocked preacher who had shown himself so unworthy to move in the best circles. Olive was right as to the chances of discovery: but would she have been so free from apprehension, had she anticipated the presence of Amy Courtright? In any case, she would have said, what difference did it make?

"How do you feel, Morgan?" she asked, as they sat cozily back in the recesses of Miss Dearwester's motor-car at starting. "I don't feel half as guilty as I hoped I would!"

Morgan was so lacking in manners as to refrain from replying. He did not feel at all guilty. He

was conscious, however, of a thrill of unreasoning joy, as he found her so close to him in the car—that flying island of privacy—and saw the glimmer of white arms and neck in its magically mysterious gloom. He wondered what she would do if he should take the gloved hand, which lay so snowily accessible to hand and eye, almost as if she offered it to him, and press it to his lips and heart as he longed to do. And all the time he was conscious that it was really and demonstrably impossible that he, Morgan Yeager, the agitator, the waif, the outcast, should be speeding along this great boulevard, in this winged boudoir, with the fragrant body warm against him of the woman to whom all men bowed down in adoration—most of them from a far, far distance—because she typified and embodied the vision which fled before them all in their secret dreams, and beckoned them to that pursuit which God ordains as each man’s impulse to fill the world with forms of beauty. It could not be possible that he, of all men, should be there where every man who had ever seen her must wish to be if he had blood in his veins. He triumphed exultingly, nevertheless, over the owners of the eyes that turned in eager glances to follow the fleeting glimpses, from pave or hansom or car, of the wonder of allurements beside him. He triumphed exultingly, because he was for this instant in possession, and the herd must stand aloof and wistful; and he knew that he had a place sacred to himself alone, as her friend. That was why he was the one who sat there beside her; and the elegant Brayton—

“Here we are,” said Olive, as the car rolled up to the Hess mansion, and stood quivering. “I wonder

how long you would keep still? No one else is daring enough to treat me so!"

"I know," said Morgan. "That's why none of them is with you to-night."

Olive was seized upon by a trio of maids, who whisked her away to the dressing-room devoted to her, as a personage to whom especial attention must be paid, lest she might take offense and go with her songs unsung. The maids were rather surprised that she came thus, with no more of retinue than one brown-eyed, conventionally-dressed gentleman of no particular mark as to appearance—who merged like a drop in the sea with the throng of similar men who went in a stream to the apartments allotted to their divesting themselves of their top-coats and hats. Morgan knew hardly one of them, beyond one or two writers of the sort known in society, who greeted him with a mixture of cordiality and surprise. Yeager was astonishing them constantly. There was that affair with Dearwester, you know, in which he made good as against so many fellows who, on form, ought to have won, hands down; and now here he was in the very lair of the Beast of Plutocracy which he had so delighted to harass by the javelins of his magazine stuff! You could get any of these reformers if you'd only let them in: yes, if you could get Yeager, you could get any of them.

Olive had not felt as guilty as she had hoped; yet, when she had had her brief interview with the orchestra-leader—a great musician whom she well knew—and was ready to go down to the music-room, she was conscious of a flutter of the heart. The remembrance of John Bloodgood walking down a rail-

way platform and telling her in the shamelessness of despair that he loved her and wanted her for his wife, filled her with a curious mingling of disgust and pity. She was timid here in this house where he might at any moment stand before her, tall, gaunt, heavy-jawed, faultlessly dressed. How well she remembered him! Would he have forgotten her, or come to hate her? There was all the terror and charm of uncertainty in the situation. It was as if one had left behind some unclassified tamed animal, and was about to be ushered into its presence after a long time, during which it might have grown to a tiger, aged to a sober and uninteresting house-cat, or developed into anything else, fond or feral.

"You are colt, Mademoiselle," said the old maestro, as he proudly swept to place, with Olive on his arm. "You shiffer. May I have the honor of getting you a wrap? The voice—*the* voice, my chilt, must not be put in danger, for any one; not for all the worlt!"

"No," replied Olive, "it is not that. Let us go on, now, please!"

She looked over the assemblage, as was her wont, seeing many faces which had grown familiar to her as members of her Chicago audiences, many to whom she had learned to smile her acknowledgments of the storms of applause which nightly swept her theater. Back yonder was Morgan, his impassiveness melting into expression in an unwonted light shining in his eyes. And over there was the tall form and harsh features which she had never seen since they went out of sight in humiliation and disgrace that day so long ago. John Bloodgood sat, his great height lifting his face so far above the rest that she saw it white and

almost ghastly, with his eyes fixed in a tranced stare upon her face.

She had chosen the *Scena and Prayer* from *Der Freischütz*, singing the Italian words. She wondered if the two men who heard her caught the meaning of the first lines of the recitative: "How nearly was I sleeping before he came again!" Then as she sang on, she seemed to herself to be uttering some magic incantation, some sybilline spell foreshadowing things to come.

"Piano, piano, canto piano!  
Ti solleva fino al Dio!"

Thus ran the words, like a petition for harmony with the high plans of destiny. And then came,

"All is peace and quiet now.  
Dearest friend, ah, where art thou?"

The spell of the vision of a maiden waiting for the sound of the footstep she loved, but hearing only the rustling of fir and birch, the nightingale's complaint of love gone wrong—this spell held her audience so still, so plastic that the disillusioned sneer died upon the tongue, and the hard glance, disclaiming feeling, was transmuted into tender commercing of heart with heart. Then came the passage,

"Forth from the gloom surrounding,  
One comes in sight! 'Tis he! 'Tis he!"

The hearers caught their breath, as they saw in her face the transports she felt, as she sensed, emanating from the gloom, something sweet and satisfying, something longed for from of old. As she retired, bowing

and smiling at the generous plaudits, she wondered at herself; and was astonished to see John Bloodgood come bursting forward through the company, as if urged by some blind impulse to throw himself in the way of her escape.

When she returned, however, to sing the additional song called for by their rapturous applause, she saw him sitting calmly by his wife. If anything unusual had happened, there was no evidence of it, unless it might be in the odd look with which Morgan Yeager was regarding Mr. Bloodgood from across the room. This time she sang *Una Voce Poco Fa*, from the *Barber of Seville*, wisely choosing the English words, beginning:

"Young men, fly when beauty darts  
Amorous glances at your hearts!"

She was now as arch and coquettish as she had before been mystic and inscrutable. The men leaned forward in a sort of delicious suspense. The women swept their fans leisurely before their faces, and pretended to like it, as she smiled forth her smiles and chanted of kisses from between lips honeyed with them. She was the very embodiment of amorous mischief as, with perfect execution, and voice limpid as a brook, she warbled her warning:

"Fly betimes, for only they conquer love that run away!"

Her hostess came sailing majestically forward, in all the pomp of far-fetched gown and dear-bought youthfulness, and thanked the prima donna. There were many who begged to be introduced, she said. Might she present her husband, Mr. Bloodgood?



## CHAPTER XXIII

### IN THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY

Morgan Yeager felt running over him the cool waves of excitement as Mr. Bloodgood stepped forward to acknowledge his "introduction" to Olive Dearwester. Mr. Bloodgood himself looked strange and distraught. But the singer was only unobservantly gracious, as she bowed low with stately grace, and interrupted his "Miss Dearwester and I—" with, "It is a delight to meet Mrs. Bloodgood's husband."

There was something in the tone and the glance that made John Bloodgood flush as if from a blow, and he stepped back, making room for the throng who sought to establish personal relations with Olive—if only by the slender thread of the touch of her glove, or a look at arm's length into the unfathomable midnight of her eyes. That she was relaxing her dignity Mrs. Bloodgood noted with keen pleasure. It had been expected that she would sing her song and withdraw, but she was actually conversing—of one less than a royal personage, one would say chatting—with these beautiful and beautifully-gowned western women of fashion, and with their fathers and brothers and husbands—who, by all the canons of wealth (outside of Chicago), ought to have been men of leisure, instead of the hard-working slaves of desk and ticker which they really were. She summoned Morgan with a magnetic glance, which made him sorry that there

were no seas of fire or serried foes in arms through which he might cleave his way merely as an evidence of good faith.

"Morgan," said she, with a look as of one discussing the time of calling the carriage, "don't look over that way, but do you know the woman by the bust of Wagner, talking with Mr. Bloodgood?"

Morgan could feel the converging glances of the scrutiny of the company, most of whom were wondering who this man could be who was thus engaged in a conversational aside with Dearwester; while the few were explaining that he was that writer Yeager, who had made such a hit with her.

"I can't look," said he, "while I am under the cover-slide in this way. I'll take the first peep I can get without advertising the fact. Shall I call the carriage pretty soon?"

"When I'm having my first fun for ages? Don't you think, Mr. Smythe-Smith, that it's a shame for every one to conspire with everybody else to make me stop doing everything I like to do? Here's Mr. Yeager, who wants to carry me off home."

Mr. Smythe-Smith, one of the three genuine men of leisure (and therefore comprising in his own proper person one-third of the entire stock of gentlemen) in the town, suppressed all evidences of the joy which, being a man, he must have felt at being so pointedly drawn into the conversation, and replied that, while one couldn't help feeling resentment at Mr. Yeager for his designs against the pleasure of the evening for the rest of us, one couldn't blame him, you know, for being madly desirous of carrying Mademoiselle Dearwester away anywhere.

"Charming of you! Charming!" exclaimed Made-moiselle Dearwester; and plunged into an exchange of small talk with Mr. Smythe-Smith, during which, from time to time, she stole a searching glance at the woman by the bust of Wagner.

Where had she seen that slender neck, that fluffy brown hair, that disdainful nose which came momentarily in sight as the lady half turned her face? Who was this person who sat with her back to the throne, while almost every one else sought some vantage-point from which to look at its occupant? Why did not Morgan come back with his report? He could find out, if he really tried: and couldn't he see that she could not look without embarrassment at any one talking with John Bloodgood? Who was she?

Morgan came, sauntering back, as if he had done some casual errand for her, and found the Smythe-Smith chat still slenderly beating the air.

"Did you find out?" asked Olive, secretly wondering at the aplomb with which her old friend was carrying himself in these uncharted social waters.

"Yes," answered Morgan; "you were right, as usual. By the way, have you met Mrs. Courtright, Mr. Bloodgood's sister? She is very much interested in your music. She has seen me, Olive, and knows me!"

The last words, for Olive alone, were true. Morgan had been too often to the Courtright home, for Amy to have forgotten his face.

"You're scared, Morgan!" she taunted mischievously. "'Fraid cat, 'fraid cat! Well, I guess we've stayed long enough, anyhow. Isn't it great fun! She won't denounce you to Mr. Bloodgood; she's

too good a society woman. Perhaps you'd better call the car, though. I want to get away undetected, so as to prove myself really fitted for a life of crime. Mr. Yeager has triumphed, Mr. Smythe-Smith. He's carrying me off!"

She took Morgan's arm as she went through the music-room, into the great hall, and up the spacious stairway. The flow of guests had tended elsewhere, and the upper hall was quite empty of either guests or servants. Olive went alone down the long corridor to her tiring-room. She was a little excited with the unwonted encounters of the night. She had been greatly wrought upon by the sense of prophecy in that aria of Von Weber's. Her artist's soul was touched in all its far-spreading filaments. The meeting with Bloodgood had tried her self-control. And, withal, she was a little apprehensive of the results, should Bloodgood come to know that his old enemy was at the reception, of an encounter between him and Morgan Yeager. Bloodgood was so passionate and violent a man, and must feel such contemptuous hatred for the fellow who had so bitterly and publicly humiliated him. She wished she were away in the car again.

The room was vacant, and she felt a little resentment that there was no maid to help her with her wraps; and then she laughed at herself for the feeling.

"Are you the lady 'at sings?"

The voice came from beyond a great sofa, and from a level with its surface. Olive looked down in astonishment, and saw a little head covered with a tangle of golden curls, from the midst of which glanced two wide blue eyes—the head of a Raphael angel. Olive

walked around to the other side of the couch. The little maid, clad in a be-ribboned night-dress, knelt as if in prayer.

"Why, sweetheart," cried Olive, gathering the child in her arms, "it's too late to say your prayers. You ought to be asleep, dearie. You'll take cold, here, and be sick."

"I'm not sayin' prayers!" was the reply. "An' I won't tate told now, 'tause you're so warm. I don't *like* to say prayers! I was mad at nurse 'tause she wouldn't let me do down an' see the lady 'at sings. I was hidin' here, to see the lady. You don't say your prayers at a sofa, do you?"

"Oh, you darling, you darling!" cried Olive. "What, don't you like to be hugged? Most people do."

"I don't," answered the child, "not at first. But you may hug me now, if you want to. You're nice an' warm, you are! Do you know where the lady is 'at sings?"

"I'm the lady 'at sings," said Olive. "And who are you, honey?"

"Mildred Doris Tourtright," answered the child. "An' I'm free years old—'most four."

The great singer, she whose *allegro* in life's sonata had refused to yield even the slightest *rallentando*; who lived for gowns and jewels and prestige; whose two terriers Zozo and Zizi, were the wonder of the bench-shows and royal personages in dogdom; she who went about in motor-cars the shades of whose colorings accounted for, if they failed to justify, the popular beliefs that the automobiles were ordered with the costumes; she whose path, so strewn with broken hearts, seemed to prove that she herself had

none—she did something which puzzled Mildred Doris Courtright sorely.

“Oh, are you, are you, darling?” she queried obscurely, and looked searchingly into the child’s face. “Oh, you are, you are! It is here in the hair, curling like his, and golden like that little boyish beard! Kiss me, dearie, kiss me!”

The little arms went about her neck, and closed in clasped hands at the back in a strong hug, while the rosy lips sought hers in the cool sweet kiss of babyhood, all unquestioning as to what wonderful thing she was, or what “it” was in her curls.

“I like you!” said Mildred. “You’re so warm. Only don’t hug me too tight!”

Down upon the sofa went the diva with the baby in her arms.

“I’ll try not to hug too tight, honey,” she said, with a queer catching in her voice. “I’ll try as hard as ever I can, and when I do, you must tell me, won’t you?”

“Won’t it make you mad?” asked the baby.

“No, no!” replied Olive. “I’d never be mad at you in the world, sweetheart.”

“I don’t like tears, *very* well,” Mildred remarked after a long silence, during which her head had lain upon the fair, rounded bosom, its diamond pendant tangled in the gold of the curls. “Free or four fell on my cheek, an’ one on my wibbon. Do you fink they’ll stain wibbons?”

“I’ll try not to drop any more,” said Olive in a voice held firmly steady.

“Can’t you sing to me?” asked the baby. “I’m dettin’ sleepy.”

"I'll tell you what I'll do," replied Olive. "I'll go with you to your room, and if you'll get into your bed, I'll sing to you, ever so lightly."

Oblivious of her surroundings, heedless of her waiting car, absorbed in the strange new yearnings which had swept over her as she found Emerson Courtright's baby in her arms, Olive was led by the little creature down the deserted corridor. Far in the distance she heard from the orchestra in the ball-room, the plaintively sensuous rhythmic pulsation of the *Vienna Blood* waltz; but she heard it absently, as in a dream. The warm pressure of the little fingers on hers thrilled her with a mad desire to press and crush them in a throe of nameless longing.

"I don't have to say my prayers over adain," said little Mildred, "*do* I? That's nice: now you may kiss me adain, if you want to."

The lady with the great deep eyes and the lambent jewel pendent from the full neck, bent down over her and brooded in a manner that placed her in little Mildred's gallery of visions for ever. Softly she stroked the little forehead until the eyes closed, tenderly she tucked in the coverlets, feeling the little plump body and limbs over and over as if to learn their every curve; and when the blue eyes opened again, and the little voice said, "Aren't you doin' to sing?" she began a song, in the tinkling, ringing maze of which little Mildred lost herself and found herself in dreamland.

"Forth from the gloom surrounding,  
One comes in sight! 'Tis he! 'Tis he!"

Light as the memory of sound, the diva's voice ran

the aria over, the words as clear as carven breath. At last, when the deep-drawn breathing in the tiny breast told of sleep too sound for easy waking, she let her voice drop to a droning hum—where do women learn these things?—and as it definitely ceased, like the debatable death of melody as the master draws his bow for the last ten seconds over the charmed string, she rose, and ran lightly back to the room where the child had found her. Morgan, dressed for the outside cold, was walking up and down the corridor. She waved an apology to him, and, running into her room, was soon robed for the carriage by the deft hands of the apologetic maids. Then, as she joined Morgan for their exit to the street, she stopped.

“I’ve forgotten something, Morgan,” she said. “Wait one moment, please.”

Swiftly she walked back to the room where little Mildred lay. She was going back for a last glance—perhaps a last kiss. She had not quite closed the door, and now pushed it open noiselessly. She took one step toward the canopied bed, and stopped in momentary horror.

On one knee knelt a roughly dressed man, bending over the child as it slept. Her terror arose from the incongruity of his dress with the surroundings. What but evil could be expected from the presence of the big, rough figure in this luxurious place at dead of night? The answer came from the posture of the man, and this it was which somewhat reassured her. He stooped his head—a fine head, covered with waving brown locks—down close, close to the flower-like face. One little pink hand he pressed to his



lips, and in great sobs there came from him, as if from the pangs of torment, pet names, words of endearment, a torrent of agonized and despairing love.

"My little girl, my baby!" This at last seemed to be the one thing he could say. The child lay slumbering in all the unconscious cruelty of innocence, and over her bent this rough man with the brown and curling locks, saying over and over, "My little girl, my baby!"

Some sound of moving silks or a natural impulse to watchfulness, made him look up. He rose, picked up a rough workman's cap from the floor, and took a step toward her.

"I beg your pardon," said he, as if wishing to avoid giving her fright. "Please do not be disturbed. I am just going. I came to—to—"

Olive had recoiled to the door in a renewal of her terror—a terror which was dispelled again by the first intonation of the voice, which had a tone of vibrant friendliness. The thing in it, however, which sent her blood eddying to her heart in an agitation made up of surprise and the dizzying shock of long-deferred discovery, was the familiar sound of the voice, the *timbre* that makes for more complete recognition than any scanning of the face can do.

"Emerson!" she whispered, calling him by that name for the first time, perhaps, in all their lives—so far does familiarity grow, sometimes, in the intercourse of visions, "Emerson! Is it possible that it is you, and *here*!"

"Olive!" he cried, so much above his breath that it might have been heard outside; "I couldn't believe

it could be you! Weren't you here a minute ago, singing to the baby? I was in there," with a gesture to an adjoining room. "I couldn't believe it—and yet it seemed—it seemed to be you. How came you here?"

The strangeness of their meeting there, of all places in the world, was the thing that impressed each of them with a sense of its incredibility. Olive's practical sense first passed this boundary of wonder.

"I came to sing," said she. "It was arranged before I knew—and something urged me to come. But you, Emerson—I've wanted so much all these years to see you, to hear news of you! And now—there's something wrong, isn't there? Tell me about it. Tell me about yourself. Things are not well with you, are they, Emerson? This creeping in here at night, this disguise, this—"

"It is not a disguise," he replied in a hurried, breathless way, as if the passing of the wonder of her being there had been succeeded by some apprehension of evil displaced for the moment only. "I am the thing I appear, Olive—but we can't talk of that. I may be followed. I came creeping in, like a thief, to see this baby of mine, Olive. I found out she was here, and I couldn't help it. The caterer's teamster helped me up the back way; but I think one man saw me. They're always watching for fear I'll get to her—and I can't live, I can't live, I tell you, unless I can see her sometimes!"

Olive stood in wonder, unable to apprehend the situation.

"Why, she's your baby!" she cried. "You have the right—"

"They took her away from me!" he said hurriedly. "It was the court—the judge, you know, when Amy got her divorce. I wasn't there, and couldn't get there until it was too late—too late! She is not mine any more. I have no more right to look at her than any tramp on the street. They took me to jail, once, for trying to see her; but I thought I could slip in here and no one would know—not even the child herself. What was that sound?"

They stood listening breathlessly for a moment. From afar off the throbbing climaxes of music from the orchestra came in faint hints of the sensuous music of the ball-room, outlines of the harmony to be filled in by the memory. The incongruity of it all impressed both these sensitive natures like the wild contradictions of a dream. She, with her world at her feet, her car awaiting her outside; the mansion, with its luxury of color and form and light and sound; the angel-faced child slumbering in her bed, unconscious of aught awry; he, her father, once master of his world, and now so mysteriously outcast, so shabby and reduced and under subjection to sinister fate, and forced to dodge and slink like a criminal, so fallen from his station of power and command—and far off, the throbbing of the Strauss waltz, while he stood with his ear turned like a hunted wolf's to catch the baying of hounds on its trail. The thing was so agonizingly violative of every association which her mind had cherished in connection with Emerson Courtright, that she felt it unendurable. She stepped to his side and took his hand.

"Can I help you?" said she. "I want to do something for you! Can I? May I?"

"No one can help me," said he, his voice now calm and even. "But, I want to talk with you, Olive. You are the one that I most want to tell—I want you to understand—"

"Wait!" said she, putting her hand on his arm.

There arose outside a confused, yet subdued, noise of scurrying footsteps, and mingled voices were heard in low but agitated tones. The fugitive pressed one kiss upon the forehead of the child, and darted into the farther room, from which windows opened to the outer world. Olive saw at a glance what was his design. She sprang into the corridor and stood outside the door of Mildred's room. A breathless serving-man came running up.

"Beg pardon, ma'am," said he, "but I was ordered to see as to the safety of the child. There was a man seen coming in, ma'am, and—"

"I found the child in my room," said the lady impressively, "and brought her here and put her to bed. I have just succeeded in getting her to sleep. You need not be uneasy about any man's harming her. I have been with her. Do not go in, or in any way disturb her, but stand here and watch. Do you understand?"

"Yes, ma'am, certainly, ma'am! I'm not to go in and disturb the child—wherever her nurse can be is more'n I can say—and I'm to stand outside till the nurse comes. Quite so, ma'am."

Olive ran down to Morgan, and they hurried to their car, with undignified speed, Morgan wondering at her behavior. Once in, she seized Morgan's hand.

"Morgan," she said, as they swept into the street, restrained by an instinct for concealment from telling,

in the chauffeur's presence, who it was, "there's a man escaping from that house. I don't want him arrested. He will go out by the back. Where can we go to pick him up? Where—"

"Stop opposite the alley that runs back of the garden," said Morgan to the chauffeur.

They had scarcely halted, when a dark form emerged from the shadow of the great pile of buildings called the stables, and moved down the passage toward them. It halted a moment, as the automobile appeared at the exit from the alley; and then, as if disdaining flight, walked resolutely on.

A chorus of cries arose behind him, and back in the dimness appeared the forms of pursuers.

"Get in with the chauffeur, friend," said Morgan, "and we'll give you a lift."

The man uttered some inarticulate reply, and made as if to pass by into the street.

"It is I: don't you know my voice?" said Olive. "Please get in! Please hurry!"

Lightly the man leaped into the car, and the chauffeur turned on speed after speed, until they had left behind them all the clamor of pursuit, left behind them the Hess mansion, and apparently left behind them Morgan Yeager's senses, as he sat in frozen wonder at Olive's sudden lapse into the sphere of accessory after the fact to some crime of the nature of which he had no remotest notion.

"I'm afraid, ma'am," said the chauffeur, slowing down, "that they're signaling us to stop, back there. What shall I do?"

"Go on!" said Olive. "We mustn't be caught. Go on!"

## CHAPTER XXIV

### MAN OVERBOARD!

At Olive's order, as if to transform their flight into a chase, the automobile darted forward. A firm, hard hand was laid upon that of the chauffeur, and a low voice spoke calmly into his ear.

"One moment," said the voice. "I have gone as far this way as I wish to go. I can take a car near here."

"Very well, sir," answered the man, "I'll turn in here on the side street and let you out."

Wondering at Olive's rescue of a man who was apparently a criminal, or at least a fugitive, a man to whom the recognition of her voice seemed to bring reassurance, a man whose dress marked him as a workman or a servant, Morgan was using every moment during which the street-lamps made such a thing possible, in a scrutiny of her face, that he might learn from her expression whether this was a mere whim, a courting of adventure, or an act to which she was impelled by a deeper motive. She stood clinging to him and the car, looking backward for their pursuers.

As the chauffeur turned into the side street at Emerson's request, the swerve of the machine threw Olive, so standing upright, bodily into Morgan's arms, and when she found herself seated again, the car was

halted at an alley, and Emerson was on the sidewalk, waving the chauffeur to go on.

"Never mind orders," said he, "but go!"

"Don't leave us like this!" cried Olive, as the car gathered way. "Don't leave us so! It's cruel!"

Morgan, still wondering at her strange behavior, and glad to get rid of this questionable passenger, motioned to the chauffeur to go on, in spite of Olive's frenzied orders for him to turn back; and as he looked over his shoulder the dark figure melted into the gloom and disappeared.

"Why, Olive!" said he. "Are you really in earnest, in this? I thought it was just a lark! Do you know the man? Do you really—"

"Oh, Morgan, Morgan," she cried. "Don't *you* know him? How can you fail to know him? It's Emerson, Morgan, Emerson Courtright; and he's in trouble and want, and we're losing him again, losing him, I tell you! Turn back, turn back; please, please turn back!"

"Go back!" said Morgan to the chauffeur. "I'll find him, Olive, if he's in Chicago. I never suspected—if you had only told me! I thought it was some old servant, or a broken-down actor of the old days, or—I couldn't imagine who. My God! Do you suppose he knew me, and thinks I let him go like that?"

The chauffeur brought the car to a halt, still far from the place where their passenger had left them. He was looking apologetically at a couple of policemen, who had been following in another car.

"Wot do you mean," roared the policeman, "by scorching down Dearborn Avenue at forty miles an hour, and refusing to stop w'en ordered?"

"Was it possible," said the chauffeur, "that I was exceeding the speed limit! I—"

"Exceedin' the speed—" began the officer, when the chauffeur, relieved to know that he was not accused of helping to burglarize General Hess' house, interrupted him with his excuses.

"I may have been hitting it up a little strong, sir," said he, "but the street was very clear, sir, and a friend of mine wanted to catch the owl car on Indiana Street west, sir. He lives over on Austin Avenue, sir, and his wife is very ill, and he was extremely anxious, sir, thinking that if he remained out all night that the anxiety might result seriously. So we left him out at Indiana Street, and since we did that, sir, we've been going, I think, very moderate, sir."

"I assume responsibility, Mr. Officer," said Olive, looking out. "The car is mine. If we have been running too fast, please take our number—I will see that everything—"

"Please let me respond," said Morgan, "if there's any court proceedings. I'm Mr. Yeager of the *Observer*, and—"

"I beg pardon, sir," answered the officer, "and I'm sure, miss, that any one on the force would be glad to do anything possible for either you or Mr. Yeager, or any of the *Observer* force, now that we know who you are, miss, but you were really hitting it up pretty strong, and orders is orders, and I'll have to ask your man, here, who is hired for such purposes, to appear at the station at ten to-morrow, and—"

"Certainly," said Morgan, "and now, as we're in a hurry, may we go?"

"Sure," answered the officer, "as quick as I get the



chuffer's name. All right, miss; good night. Sorry I had—"

But the car was perilously near to another infraction of the ordinances in such cases made and provided, as it sped back toward Indiana Street, while the policeman stood with his apology to beauty and newspaper influence half-uttered.

There was no one on the sidewalk, no one in the alley, no one looking like their old friend on any street within a radius of several blocks. They went west on Indiana Street until they overtook the last street-car, which Morgan boarded and found out from the conductor that a man answering to his description of Emerson had ridden with him from Clark Street to Franklin, where he got off. The conductor had the impression that he had decided to take the "L" down town. They sped back to the elevated station nearest the place mentioned, and Morgan, feeling that he was defeated, sought hopelessly through the great station, empty save for the sleepy ticket-sellers. A train came by, halted, but took on no passengers, and swept away, leaving Morgan to descend with his tidings of failure to Olive in her car.

"He is gone," said she. "We have lost him. There is no use in looking further. Let us go home, Morgan. We have lost him again in this awful city—it is no use—let us go home."

She said not a word as they went along; but once, as Morgan uttered some exclamation of regret, she took his hand and pressed it.

"Come and see me to-morrow," said she, as she left him. "You feel as much disappointed about this—this terrible thing—as I do. But I haven't told you

about meeting him up there in—that house, and I must. But not to-night.”

She went up to her apartments, and astonished her drowsy maids by dismissing them for the night. She undressed slowly, making long pauses, during which she gazed out of the windows, or sat in whatever posture some absorbing phase of thought had found and fixed her. The night was far spent, when she lay down, at last, and when her mother came, as was her wont, to look at her daughter while she slept, she found her looking with wide wearied eyes at the hangings of her bed.

“Good morning, ma,” said she. “Yes, I woke a little early. I didn’t sleep as soundly as usual, dear, that’s all.”

In the meantime, where was Emerson Courtright? What was the significance of his mean attire, his fumbled workman’s cap, his thief-like entry into that great house, his cry to Heaven over his lost child, his fugitive’s escape? What crime had he committed, that it had been found necessary to cut him off from the little angel who, in spite of his fall from his high place, he still so dearly loved? In what haunt of the outcast, what den of crime or vice had he hidden himself? Let us see.

From the west windows of certain lofty buildings in the Loop District of Chicago, one may see by looking beyond the river, with its strange drawbridges, its teeming commerce, its procession of masts and smokestacks and funnels, the dingy continuation of the cross-town street up which he happens to be gazing, a sooty canyon, lost in smoke. Over the whole landscape, sweeps a black cloud obscuring the

sun for miles and miles, filling the air with poisonous dust of noxious fumes, staining, defiling, contaminating everything it touches. When the good west wind blows in pure from the plains and prairies, it goes on across the blue lake, dragging a sable plume of soot and gas, a fallen wind, a debauched wind, a ruined wind until far, far out on the unsalted sea, where, perhaps, its past may escape detection by the unsuspecting sails its breath may fill. The cold east wind, sweeping clean the Loop District with its monstrous palaces of trade and its heaped-up Babel towers of stone and steel, goes on over this district west of the river, and flies to the prairies foul from the commercialized embrace which stains but does not warm; and darkens the heavens half-way across a state. Once over the river, one finds that the streets go on and on and on for miles, smoky and dingy avenues of discolored brick and stone and smutched and weathered wood, with occasionally some newer district where the walls are not yet masked by soot, and once in a while a greater pile than usual where some great corporation has built its huge factory or machine shop. And from every building, pours forth the smoke of its torment, going up to heaven for ever. This is the West Side of Chicago.

Cutting through it from north to south runs Halsted Street, the longest street in the world. The pedestrian who is so hardy as to undertake it, may turn from his ramble under blue skies and in refreshing airs among the villas and suburban mansions between the Sheridan Road and Lake Michigan, and entering Halsted Street set his face south for a stroll to its end. He will walk for hours among the green lawns, the

flower-gardens, and the columned porches of the well-to-do, and then through long lines of flats and shops and boarding-houses. He will notice from mile to mile, those almost indescribable but nevertheless unmistakable signs which mark the change from a district of homes to one inhabited by lodgers and those who dwell in flats. If he starts at noon and is a good walker, he will come, late in the afternoon, to a region where warehouses and factories speak of the waterside, and where the cheap lace curtains and tawdry hangings seen through the windows tell of furnished apartments, and the presence of a population which reckons its sojourning by days and weeks, rather than by months or years.

He crosses the river, and plunges into the labyrinth of nationalities, races, and occupations of the West Side. The traffic on the streets is heavier now, and the street-cars run closer together and slower. At times the roar of the street rivals that of Randolph or Clark. The buildings rise higher as he proceeds, and, as evening shuts down, the electric signs, the crowds upon the sidewalks, and the clattering of the myriad vehicles might deceive the stranger into the belief that he was in that part of the city known as the business center were it not for the constellations of electric lights, like stars in some odd new straight-lined sky away over there in the east.

The atmosphere of the region is strange, variegated, cosmopolitan, chaotic. Here are squares filled with a dense population of negroes; here are the unpronounceable names of Poles, Bohemians and other Slavs. About some streets hang the scents and echo the sounds of the poverty of Italy. Elsewhere, are

seen evidences of the energy and enterprise of the modern Greek. Syrian, Lithuanian, Silesian, Croatian, Scandinavian, African, Jew, Greek, Sicilian and Russian; Ghetto, sweat-shop, slum; Caucasian, Semite, Ethiopian; all thrown together into a great pen in which the pressure and shaking of penury tends constantly to break down all distinctions of races, creeds and inheritances—such is the West Side, through mile after mile of which our traveler makes his astonished way.

In the four miles between the rivers, he passes forty nationalities. He is now in another waterside region, whose night sky is filled with the vapor and glare of giant factories and warehouses. Again he sees the masts and spars of commerce, and as he crosses the south river, notices that the current flows strongly away from the lake, into which nature once caused it all to fall, and toward the heart of the continent, bearing with it to pollute streams hundreds of miles away the fertility of a million farms—one of the drains by which the great Abscess discharges. And now, as he makes his way onward, through sinister places of unknown affiliations, he spies great shapeless structures on his right hand, more ugly, more uncouth than any yet seen. For a mile he passes a great expanse, stretching almost as far as the eye can see, of pens filled with cattle and hogs and sheep, he smells their effluvia, he hears their bellows and screams and bleats, he hears the cries of those who drive them through the passageways, and up the chutes, and all his senses respond to the assault upon them of the great shambles, where they die.

He is glad to get on beyond this inferno, even

though it is through a squalid country full of close-built houses inhabited by those whose work it is to stab, and cut up, and clean, and boil, and eviscerate, and render annuals, and to pack, and label, and ship the innumerable products of the abattoirs. These people look at him with dull eyes, and seem to have absorbed some of the spirit of the brutes they slaughter. If it is the night of pay-day, he will see them beating and wounding one another in brawls which attract no attention unless some of them are killed or desperately hurt. Violence and bloodshed seem quite unimportant when and where the very air reeks with it as a part of the day's work.

A mile or two makes a great difference. He passes through another zone of flats and boarding-houses of the better sort. Five or six miles, he is beginning to think, is a small matter of distance in this interminable street; and fully so far must he go before he reaches Englewood railway station, where he finds himself once more among the green lawns and columned porticoes of the rich. And yet, before he reaches the end of Halsted Street, on and on he must go, mile after mile, until he comes to the open spaces along the Calumet River. He has passed through a cross section of American society. He has experienced the magnificent municipal distances upon which we pride ourselves, and the social ones which we contemplate with less swelling of the breast. He has gone as far as from Rome to Civitavecchia. This walk would have carried him from Tottenham, straight through all London, on into the country, past Maidenhead and Windsor, and on to Reading; or from Greenwich down to the mouth of

the Thames, with miles enough to spare to reach out to the Nore Light. Or if he had started from the opposite side of Paris, and gone as far, he would have pierced the mighty capital, passed Charenton, passed Cesson, passed Melun, and gone on to the greenery of Fontainebleau. And in none of these places, would he have seen aught so full of promise and portent and absorbing interest to him who studies cities and nations and men and women, as this great strange Halsted Street, the wonderful thoroughfare which cuts Chicago from the beach of the lake on the north to the prairie on the south. For here shall be decided issues fraught with more of weal or woe to the world than Rome or London or Paris can bring forth.

Somewhere in the neighborhood of the intersection of Halsted and Harrison Streets, in the heart of the Labyrinth, was the room, on a side street, into which Emerson Courtright crept that morning just as the dawn grew gray above the smoke.

## CHAPTER XXV

### PICTURES ON THE SCREEN

An iceberg may float majestically down the warm reaches of the Gulf Stream, well-poised and steady as a liner, until, all in an instant, the eating of the thaw will reach the point where the great balance is destroyed, and in roar and rending and boiling of foam its acres of ice-island break to pieces by its own shifting of position. It has been trembling on the verge of destruction for weeks. So an equilibrium in related lives may, by some chance—if there be such a thing—suddenly be disturbed, and that which was calm becomes storm, that which was poise takes on perturbation and quaking, that which was blue ripple and safe harborage turns to mad whirlpool, crushing blow, and the down-draught of sinking immensities.

The chance circumstance of Olive's consent, against Mr. Brayton's objection, to sing for General Hess' daughter, was some such thing. It led to encounters which left her all a-quiver with an agitation of the nature of which she knew, who shall say how much? She had seen her old friend bowed under some great grief, humbled to the point of creeping into his child's room like a burglar to steal the fond look, the kiss and the embrace which some tyranny denied to him. There was great, deep, yearning pity in this, and indignation which sent her blood pulsing to her



very finger-tips in anger, while her eyes filled with tears. And yet, and yet—what was this thrill which came to her so much like happiness, as she thought of that moment when she stood with him by little Mildred's bed, when he told her in those hurried sentences that they had taken the baby away from him, and that she was no longer his? It was a tragedy, and it moved her to tragic pity—but what was there in it which sang to her like some sad modulation from grief toward joy or hope? She never pursued this question to solution. But just here she always found the way opening to a speculation upon the relations between Emerson and Amy. Once she spoke to Morgan about it, and Morgan said nothing except that there had evidently been some proceedings on Mrs. Courtright's part, either for divorce or separation. Olive wanted to ask him to find out for her just what claim, if any, this slender woman with the modish dresses, the fluffy brown hair, the disdainful nose and mouth, might still have upon Emerson; but, somehow she could not make the request.

Mrs. Dearwester's opinions were clear, and based upon long observation of the way things are done.

"There hasn't been any separation without a divorce," she observed. "If the Bloodgoods had a chance to get rid of Emerson Courtright altogether, you may bet they've jumped at the chance. And his wife has got the child given to her. The judges always give the woman the best of it, on this side of the water, anyhow; and the Bloodgoods own the judges—out in Lattimore. Poor Emerson! I wonder what grounds she got the divorce on?"

Mrs. Dearwester's statement that the Bloodgoods

owned the courts must, of course, be taken as the irresponsible utterance of an old lady who knew not whereof she spoke, and entirely unwarranted. At the same time, one would expect that Amy Bloodgood Courtright, represented by Mr. Will Lattimore, would have certain advantages in divorce proceedings against the fallen preacher, over Mary Ann Jones in the case of Jones vs. Jones.

Morgan Yeager was, one would say, out of the reach of any great disturbance from the chance meetings at the Hess reception and ball. He was a mere intellectual machine, trying hard to place himself upon a little literary eminence from which he could make a few thousands in our teeming billion-and-a-half hear what he had to say as to the rights of man to a standing-place on earth—and in the meantime, to earn a living playing at “trust-busting” by writing for the *Observer*. He was no Leyden jar full of statical discharges to be given off by reason of accidental encounters at a ball. John Bloodgood might go suddenly as mad as ever at the sight of his old cruel Dulcinea—a sight which he had wisely avoided hitherto; and run careering off over the lines of the whole Halliday System for a month, as announced at the general offices; and in three days rush back to Chicago to the end that the great singer should receive a queer shock night by night at the sight of his lofty form with the gaunt face, and the haggard eyes staring at her from box or parquet or balcony, or even from the remote recesses of the gallery; and finally a series of notes, growing more passionately incoherent, asking for a meeting—just one—for just one moment; but surely the author of *The Incidence of Taxation*

was beyond such volatility. And yet, his life was changed, too.

For one thing, he must find Emerson Courtright. Why? He asked himself this question repeatedly (before he desisted from anathematizing himself for raising the point) and finally answered it. There were two reasons: First, he could never sit quietly in the same city where the man who had been and was still more than a brother-in-blood to him lived, companionless, deserted by wife, bereft of child, lost and cast away, his great nature obscured by a life of penury, his great gifts rusting unused. And second, he must learn the answer to Mrs. Dearwester's casual question, "On what grounds had the divorce been granted?" He, like almost everybody, knew the common statutory grounds, desertion, cruelty and infidelity; the question occurred to him now: what ground had been alleged?

And Olive Dearwester wanted to find Emerson. Just why she wanted to do this, Morgan never allowed himself to ask. Just what good could come of it, just what harm might result, he did not inquire. She said nothing to him about finding Emerson, more than has already been recorded; but, somehow, Morgan knew that he could do nothing more important in the way of ministering to her queenly desires, than to go to her some day and ask if he might introduce a friend, and then send in Emerson Courtright. That Emerson's preferences could in any way run counter to hers never occurred to him. The fact may as well be acknowledged that Morgan was back again in the condition which made it necessary to him to serve Olive, asking nothing. That evening

when he sat by her as they went to the reception, he had begun to hope, almost, that he might—but that was nonsense! He would just keep on working for her in the many ways of which she knew, and in this one of which she knew not. By such tactics he could be near her, to the wonder and anger of Mr. Brayton and many others, who were as fain as he to serve her, but asked much; he knew this, but he could not know how grateful, like a cool hand to a fevered brow, was his presence and service to the woman who had said of Emerson Courtright—and very unjustly, we think—that he was the only man she had ever known “whose conception of love embodied anything but a phase of selfishness”; and who was, at times, utterly weary of the unceasing resistance to the unremitting siege. Morgan’s approach was something new to her. Fortunate besieger, who hits upon a new approach—and has the address to push home the advantage it gives!

The man over in the mean room under the ocean of smoke and near where Harrison Street cuts Halsted—was he one of those to whom that night’s events brought mutation and unrest?

At first glance, at least, one would say not. He crept into his room quietly, not, as the reader may have guessed, because he feared anything, but to avoid disturbing the early morning sleep of people just across the partition. He had entered with a night-key, and made his way darkly to his room, where he shut his door before turning on a tiny flow of gas and lighting it. There was a cheap iron bedstead in the room, a pine-bottomed chair, and an old morris-chair in which a pile of newspapers had

been laid to keep down the spiral springs which had burst up through the faded upholstery. There was no radiator or register in the room, which seemed to depend for its heat upon the stove in the next apartment. There was such a chill in the air that his breath made a little cloud at every expiration; and the bed, thin as it was, looked inviting as promising warmth. Yet Courtright sat in the wooden chair, and seemed oblivious of the hour.

Quite unmoved, one would say: but that is because we have not yet perfected any screen on which thought can be thrown as a picture from a lantern. With such a screen, before the stir in the next room, as of people getting up and making breakfast, turns his mind to the duties of the day, one would see much.

We should see deep gloom in desert wastes of the spirit, as he pondered on what happened to him when the First Church of Lattimore revolted against and turned him and his Word out into the world. Then there succeeds a hall filled with chairs, and a congregation of working people—we recognize Simpson, Overmeyer, Hicks, Strang and Morgan Yeager (who soon departs)—and a cottage, where Amy receives him with kisses and embraces. This picture is rather bright and sunny. There are shadows, here and there, when his people fail to rally as they should, to the support of the new church—the Church of the Economics of Jesus—but his farm in Kansas is sold, and the bills are paid, and we will take no thought nor be anxious for to-morrow. Amy does not care for his new parishioners, neither will she attend his services; but she refuses to believe the calumnies about him, and she does not leave him. There are

other shadows, now. There is the great strike: and the strong men of Emerson's congregation are driven out of their places. Many of them are imprisoned for violation of Judge Bloodgood's injunction—many who had never a notion what the injunction was, and thought they had to break some statute, or at least be served with "papers," before they could lose their liberty. And, yes, things are not so bright at the cottage. The rent is due, and there is no money. Emerson's name is in the injunction, and Amy is bitter toward the strikers, and blames Emerson for defying her father's mandate by his speeches and his entreaties to the men not to man the trains and steal their brothers' jobs—and they have a difference which is as deeply divisive as an open quarrel.

It is darker yet, though there is no apparent breach when Amy goes to her mother, and the cottage passes to other hands. Emerson pleads with her to let him seek another pastorate, to take up any sort of work, telling her that he wants to be by her side, now, of all times, and to have their baby come to their own home; but Amy is cold and bitter, and turns away her face from his caresses. He thinks it is her condition which makes her perverse—as if there were not other cause enough!—and lets her go; and this darkest scene we have yet beheld shows her going back into the Bloodgood house, in which, for very pride, he can not enter.

And now we see a procession of churches—some with old-fashioned steeples, some with square wooden towers, some in large towns and cities, and some in villages—and to one after another of them comes Emerson, with his message of Christianity when they

all want churchianity. And everywhere they listen gladly to the strange eloquence of this preacher with the head crowned with godlike pathos—until he speaks to them of what is meant by the government being upon His shoulders; and of the commandments, as bearing on our institutions; and of the gospel as “good tidings to the poor”; and of the wickedness of permitted robbery; and of the adulteries which stain our lives because we all commit them—some of us by forcing others into conditions where they must fall, human nature being as it is, others by failing to help in making over the laws that cause this, others, the least wicked, by yielding to the lure of sin offered as the alternative to life too barren for endurance, or too hard for flesh and blood—and when he speaks thus, and tells them that Jesus calls upon them to make over the State, so that only those who use may hold the land, and none shall own the highways or anything else which gives him such kingly dominion, then we see them, one and all—save for here and there an exception—turning upon him, scribes, Pharisees, chief priests and devout women of honorable estate, and out he goes again upon the highways, to humbler and humbler sanctuaries, but to none so humble that there is not under its drippings those so blind and bitter and mistaken, and so powerful in the church, as to expel him once more.

Never once do we find him repining or reviling. He knows that they do not know, and he feels toward them as toward children who throw themselves in a passion down upon the hard stones and gravel, hurting themselves more than any one else. If his heart bleeds it is for them and the Cause, and not for him-

self. He comforts himself, too, with the hope that the truth he sows will spring up here and there, in the strange way such seed has of escaping the heat of the sun and the fowls of the air, and will sometime overrun the tares of blind error. Perhaps, he sometimes thinks, this being driven from city to city and from town to town on account of the calumnies of Mrs. Aylesbury and the Bovee black-list, are God's agencies for the wide sowing of the truth. There is comfort in this, for everywhere he leaves a disciple or two, and the shadows lighten on the screen as he is borne up by the reformer's ecstasy, the vision of a world redeemed, and of his small share in its redemption. But even a reformer has weaknesses—and there is the estranged wife and the golden-haired baby.

He goes back to Lattimore and visits Amy every day while she lies so white and pale, and is roused by nothing except the little bundle brought to her at times by the nurse. He holds her hand while they are permitted to fondle and caress their baby; and the things which have separated them look so foolish, and so inconsequential, as the great flooding waves of the deeper reason which we call instinct sweep through the hearts of Amy and Emerson. This is the bright place which runs across the screen, so lambent—and, by its brevity, so narrow! Its inevitable brevity: for a man like Emerson could not long remain in a house where every soul but one was his enemy; and if Amy, before the baby came, could not prudently follow him from one camp of a day to another, how much less could she come now, when there were nurses and attendants and other



expensive things without which no baby which amounts to anything can be reared! That marked transition on the screen, from the soft and tender glow to the lurid gloom, is where, at a Bloodgood family conference, the instincts were remanded to the subconsciousness, where they belong, and reason resumed her throne, with prudence in her train.

We see now on the screen a year or so among mountains and mines and miners. The churches grow fewer, and we see crowds gathering about the wanderer as he speaks from boxes on street corners, and to turbulent assemblages on mountain-sides and in groves. Once we see him carried at the bayonet's point, and by cruel force, beyond a state line with a train-load of these rough men: and, though the soldiers offer to take him back, he stays with the expelled workmen, and talks to them of the law of love and of the Christian state and the Sermon on the Mount—to which they can give only slight and intermittent attention; for they are in a desert, without food or water, and may not return to the only work they know; because there is established that new monstrosity in a free land, a "Permit Office" which must be passed before men may work, and which they can never pass because they belong to a union. And then their minds are disquieted because their wives and children are back there in the state which expelled them, starving, perhaps, and they can not go back to them. Rough men they are, but the wanderer thinks of his own wife and child, and his heart yearns over them, and some of them look up from their hopeless plight, so ominous, and so incredible a plight for American workmen, and listen to the sky-pilot

with the golden-brown curls, and the wavy beard, and the blue eyes, and the haunting appeal in his voice. And sometimes, when he rises to indignant denunciation of the laws which make men's jobs so vitally precious that they struggle for them like beasts, his voice rings out in a pæan like the *Ça ira* of a new revolution, and they rally about him with muffled yells of anger tearing through the dust of parched throats.

Who is this man, whom we see him encountering in the mountain city with the verdureless hills? The wanderer sits with him in a saloon, and tries to dissuade him from some wild resolve. It is Overmeyer, the Lattimore engineer, an outcast by the loss of the great strike, too old to take up new work, and too corpulent for common labor. The other wanderer has listened to him as he has told of his struggle to find some place where he might return to the control of the mighty engines which he loved, and of his failure, though incompetents were ruining them on every division. Like Emerson, he had filled places here, there and everywhere, always overtaken in a month or so by the vengeance of the black-list, until he had become a tramp, earning a penny now and then by odd jobs, and parted from his last hope. And next we see Emerson standing by Overmeyer's corpse, and testifying before a coroner's jury that the man had been a friend of his, and that he had heard him declare that life was intolerable to him, and that he meant to end it. We do not see the coroner's verdict, however, which, with the inaccuracy of such findings, refrains from saying that the deceased came to his death by a black-list in the hands of a railway management.

We do see, however, our wanderer reading a letter from Lattimore found in Overmeyer's pocket, and handed over to him by the authorities. We see him read it, then pale as at some fearful news, and begin a feverish journey eastward. He pays for a ticket as far as his means render it possible. Then he haunts railway yards and steals rides in freight-cars and on "blind-baggage" and brake-beams. He loathes himself for his dirt and squalor and impotency. He seems entered in some fatal race against time, and is held back and hampered and hamstrung by adverse fate. Finally we see Lattimore once more, and the tramp passing by the First Church, biting his lips as if to refrain from crying out, and on to the county courthouse, into the office of the clerk, who utters a cry of horrified surprise, as the disreputable object, who is at first told that there is nothing there for him, faints, when informed that the case of Courtright *versus* Courtright has been heard, that a decree has been granted, and that Mrs. Courtright has been given sole custody of the little girl. Some such collapse had come upon him as that of the last night of the revival at Angus Falls.

The clerk, who as a politician thought it best to do something which would please such friends as Emerson might have in Lattimore, takes care of him, hunts up Simpson the cigar-maker, buys Emerson clothes, and is so kind and good that we hereby apologize for our mean hint that his motive was selfish. The screen is very dark here, and grows darker, until it is pitchy black, that day when the father, haunting ways frequented by her nurse, seizes upon his baby as she takes the air near the Bloodgood house, and

frightens both her and her nurse, as he embraces and kisses her; and then is thrown into jail by a police force under Bloodgood command for attempted kidnapping. We may well pass to other scenes. He should not have felt that uncontrollable yearning for the child. He had no business to dream of her little pink fingers, her chubby legs and toes, her blue, blue eyes—so like his own—and her silky hair! The court had said he was not a proper person to have access to Mildred, that he had deserted her mother without cause for a period of more than two years, and that he had been otherwise and more grossly unfaithful to his marriage vows, as sworn to by good and true men like John James Finneran and William Toombs, otherwise known as "Speck." He had no business to approach the child. He was nothing but her father, anyhow, denatured by decree of court.

The people in the next room have long been astir, now, and there is the sizzling and hissing which tells of breakfast. One even smells a faint aroma of coffee. Still the wanderer sits, the little intermittent cloud of his frozen breath coming and going; and still the thoughts flow on, in continuation of those we have thrown upon the screen. He hears nothing. He has leaped in his thought over his coming to Chicago and his doings since, to that night. He is thinking of the little sleeping form in its bed, of the slowly darkening silken curls, of the pang of parting from his little one, like a thief; and of the brooding lullaby which had awakened so many memories as he listened from his hiding-place. Olive did not shrink from him. There was the old warmth in her glance. And how noble, how majestic was her beauty! He had seen

her portrait on dead walls and hoardings, but though she was in this same enormous city, her sphere, so far from his, brought her no nearer than if she had been in Paris or London. He had never expected to see her again; and to see her *there*—it was not to be understood. But she was not bad, not spoiled, not cold—or she would not have been mothering his baby as she did. But how came it? How came it?

There was a tap at the door, but he did not hear it.

“The cookin’ racket’s over now, Molly,” said a man’s voice, “an’ I’ll open the door an’ let the warm in.”

The door swung slowly inward, and, drawn on to inquiry by the lighted gas-jet, a big head followed, and a strong Irish face with a drooping, grizzled, yellow mustache, faded as by weathering, was turned toward him. Then the man walked in, and laid his hand on Courtright’s shoulder.

“What, Mr. Courtright!” he exclaimed. “Haven’t yeh been to bed? Or is it up airly yeh are? Man, you’re perishin’ with cold!”

“I—I got in a little late,” answered Emerson, beginning to shiver, “and I’ve been—been thinking, Tim. What time is it?”

“Tim Burns,” said a voice from the door, as a stout woman in a slatternly wrapper saw and took in the situation, “Tim Burns, ye great blundherin’ gawk, bring the poor mon out and give him a cup o’ hot coffee. He nades it! Misther Coortright, Misther Coortright, it’s thratin’ me bad, it is, to come in an’ sit in a coold room wid no bite nor sup the whole endurin’ night! Come whur it’s warm, man, an’ eat yer breakfast.”

Emerson thanked them, and assuring them that he was all right, sat down and began to eat his meal of fried potatoes and bacon, with black coffee.

Burns and his wife exchanged glances, as if to comment upon his look of general unfitness, but the repast was finished in silence, save for the small-talk of the table. Emerson was preoccupied and wordless.

"You'll hardly work, to-day?" said Burns, as they shoved their chairs back from the table.

"Oh, yes, indeed," responded Emerson. "Why not?"

"Yeh don't look fit," was the answer. "Yeh better lay up, and make up sleep."

"No," answered Emerson, "I'm as fit as can be. That's one thing about this sort of work. It keeps you awake."

"With me," answered Burns, "I'd drop asleep on the dray, an' block traffic. I'd show up in the Harrison Street station the next mornin' if I went awake all night. But, say, Mr. Courtright, about that talk you was to give the teamsters at the hall this evenin'. Maybe you'd better wait. That traitor Barney Hagan an' his crew may show up an' try to run things; an' if they do, why almost anny place will be more quiet like."

"I don't mind a little argument," replied Emerson. "And trouble never breaks out when you expect it. I've been through the Cœur d'Alene mill since we lived in Lattimore, and I'm used to wilder times than Chicago can show. I'll come back from work at four, and get a good sleep; and then I'll go with you to the teamsters' meeting, if you don't mind, Tim."

## CHAPTER XXVI

### A QUEST IN THE CATACOMBS

The case of Mr. John Bloodgood was one calling for the severest condemnation. He was married to that charming lady, of whose affection for him there could not be the slightest doubt, the daughter of General Hess. Captain Alleyne of the British Army, it is true, had seized upon some equivocal circumstances in those other and younger years as excuse for the lodgment of charges against her behavior which, as good Americans, it behooves us to deny. In any case, every vestige of friskiness had been eliminated from her way of life, and all she asked of wedlock was that fidelity and singleness of heart on Jack's part which she delighted to give to him, whatever may have been her Alleyne attitude. In fact, Jack was sometimes half regretful that her disposition was not more what—what the Alleynes had hinted, and what the London version of her story alleged. Of course he felt this only as a passing mood when his Mildred's devotion grew burdensome. He had not looked forward to the necessity—or shall we say the problem?—of prolonging the honeymoon into these years of her pitiful struggle to maintain a semblance of the youth which was long since past. He had his wages in the way of preferment and power; but he grew tired of rendering the duty which the situation demanded of him. There were, as Morgan

Yeager had said, rumors of his flitting about fresher flowers; but as for any open breach, there was none. General Hess doubtless thought Mildred and Jack very happy. Why should any outsider question his opinion?

The "severest condemnation" alluded to might not have been his due prior to that night when Olive Dearwester sang at the reception. He had tried hard to hate her. He had felt resentful when he had heard of her successes, and when her face appeared in the pictures with which the magazines and newspapers were filled, he had turned away from them tingling with the humiliation of the day she had left Lattimore. When Amy had applied for her divorce, he had succeeded in keeping the name of the co-respondent out of the pleadings, and out of the papers—just why, he could hardly have told.

"What's the use of making any more stir than is unavoidable?" he had said to Mr. Lattimore, and the lawyer had agreed that there was none.

He had stayed away from the theater where *The Queen of Atlantis* was running. He had turned away his eyes from the dark face on the bills: because, he said to himself, he hated the woman who had humbled him so, and whose name he had kept out of the papers.

And then came the reception, and the sudden dawning on his sight of the form, the face, the eyes; and the voice in his ears. He should have remembered Mildred; but he forgot her completely. He should have thought of his wrongs, but suddenly they also slipped his mind, or he laid them to Emerson Court-right (with whom he felt himself even, now), or to



her mother, or to the fellow who had struck him. He went into secret ecstasies at the thought that perhaps she had come to his home as a sign of amity. Every hope he had ever cherished soared up anew—she was a woman of the world, now; she was an actress, and had lost the prudish scruples she had felt as a church singer; she was out from under the influence of that preacher; he, Jack Bloodgood, was a great figure in the railway and financial world; she might be his yet. All these things had passed through his mind before she had half finished the aria from Von Weber, as water surges through a burst dam. Even the words, breathing of the return of the absent one, asking “Dearest friend, ah, where art thou?” did they not carry a message? Such was his wild thought, as he broke through the assemblage toward her when she finished, and drew to himself the amused glances of all who noted him, and that questioning look of much more than amusement which Morgan Yeager was giving him as Olive returned to bow her thanks for their applause—and to sing her second song, more full of love and suggestion than the other, while he was getting himself under control.

Then came her repudiation of all acquaintance with him, her taunt—if it was a taunt—to “Mrs. Bloodgood’s husband!”

It was this which drove him from her that night, and sent him out upon his work with the affairs of the railway. But the old fever burned fiercer than ever. There were many in Chicago who dreamed of her, and would have given the world for her favor; but among them all Jack Bloodgood was the only one who could carry over to the great Dearwester the

memory of a girl who had hung upon his arm, who had played and sung for him alone, who had let him press her hand, and who—that night at the gate—had allowed him to kiss her. The wine of his infatuation was headier, therefore, than theirs, and the vertigo more and more confusing. He could not talk with any degree of consecutiveness of the problems of railroading which he went out to discuss. The trip had taken him to Lattimore, and he had disarranged the schedule by waiting there, without any reason which he could give, for his family were all absent. Mr. Feek had found him that night standing at the gate of the little cottage where Miss Dearwester had lived, and wondered what made him behave so queerly. This was at ten. Mr. Feek passed him by, being skilled in knowing when he was not wanted by his superiors. Hours after, Feek, being a nocturnal animal, had found him again at the same place, as if he had never moved. When he spoke to him, John Bloodgood started as if from sleep, and told Feek that he was going back to Chicago, and that he didn't want to be bothered with business.

Perhaps, he thought, she had not meant to rebuff him, that night. Of course, she would not want to talk of their old acquaintanceship in Mildred's presence. How infernally stupid of him! And then began the haunting of the theater, the sending of notes by ushers and in bouquets, the pleading for an interview. Olive showed all these to Morgan Yeager, and laughed at them, as a Roman damsel might have laughed at a wounded gladiator in the circus. Morgan looked grave.

"I don't know about this," said he, as he read one

of Bloodgood's notes, filled with incoherent vows and pleadings and protestations that if he might once see her face to face, once take her hand in his, it might save him from worse things than death. He could explain everything to her. There were many things he could tell her, and so on.

"I don't know about this. A man like Bloodgood isn't apt to write such stuff as this unless he is madly running away with himself—or is allowing himself the comfort of too much drowning of his sorrows."

"I like that!" answered Olive. "Let me tell you, sir, that that sort of behavior has been quite epidemic in some neighborhoods, and that I take it as shabby of you not to be able to imagine sober men with a sound brain being so affected!"

"But," replied Morgan, refusing to see her point, "this is— I must have a look at him, Olive."

"Perhaps you'd better call in an alienist!" replied Olive. "Oh, Morgan, they're all alike, and the coldest intellect mimics this 'insanity' as well as the hottest-headed. Don't waste any pity on John Bloodgood. I'm something of a specialist in such cases myself, and you may take my word for it!"

Nevertheless, something occurred soon which made her look upon the matter more seriously. She and her manager, Mr. Brayton, with Mr. Grant, the owner of the theater, and Mrs. Grant, his wife, with little Odette Cassler, who took the part of Titania, and little Odette's husband, Smith, who did something in the scenery so as to be with the show, were having a sober and friendly sort of supper in the great Pompeian-room café on Michigan Avenue. It was something after midnight, and the people were so few as

to make it comparatively private—though strangers to the number of half a dozen or so dropped in when the word went round that Miss Dearwester was on view. Their table was back of the fountain and not far from the corner of the room. Brayton was in high spirits, and the two married couples seemed in a conspiracy, in matters of both omission and commission, to give Algernon his chance. They steered the chat—which had all the freedom of daily intimacy—into channels approaching the heart. They paired off so as to give Brayton opportunities for whispered asides, and they laughed and smiled at his violations of the etiquette which calls for publicity in utterances. Olive felt the excitement of the chase, and her cheek showed a higher carmine, her eyes burned brighter than usual. Brayton leaned to her as he bestowed on her the speeches and glance which nature and art conspired to make so eloquent to her, so well within the bounds of propriety from the viewpoint of those curious ones—to whom so little thought was given. Suddenly, as Brayton murmured to her some inanity which would look rather foolish in print, he felt a hand upon his shoulder, a hand that pushed him away from Olive, pushed strongly, and shut down with vise-like pressure. His first impression was that some waiter was committing this enormity: and then he saw Olive's face whitening as she looked upward and backward, and he strongly threw the hand from his shoulder as he sprang to his feet, faced somewhat more than six feet of gaunt and faultlessly dressed manhood, and looked from a disadvantage of three-quarters of a foot into the cadaverous face of John Bloodgood.

“What does this mean?” ejaculated Brayton, his arm

drawing back as if to strike. "What does this mean, I say!"

Grant was by his side instantly, and held back the blow. Bloodgood stood looking, not at Brayton, but at Olive, and repeating over and over that she must pardon him, but that he couldn't endure it, he couldn't endure it.

"I know him," said Grant to Brayton; "he's off his head, somehow—probably booze. Don't hit him. That's right, Smith, help me with him. What's the matter, Mr. Bloodgood? Aren't you well? Haven't you any friends with you? You aren't alone, are you?"

"I'm alone," said Bloodgood, turning to look back at the group he had so rudely disturbed. "Get me a drink, Mr. Grant, won't you? I'm all right, if you'll just get me a drink. I've got a cab out here. Grant, if that fellow feels insulted, tell him, by God, who I am, and that he knows where to find me. I may not act quite—quite—"

"Oh, you're all right!" answered Grant. "He doesn't feel affronted, I know. Here's your cab—good night, Mr. Bloodgood."

Mr. Bloodgood went away with a feeling that, somehow, he had crossed the Rubicon separating the proprieties from the land of chimeras and strange actions into which he had for days felt himself impelled to enter. He had grown accustomed to a certain haziness of purpose as to the places which he visited and his destination when he went out, and twice that week he had ridden to the car barns on the North Clark Street cable road, forgetting to alight. Once he had forgotten it again on his return trip, and had gone

back down town, where he spent the night in the lobby of the hotel where Olive lived. But this was his first experience in making himself really a spectacle. He did not care, he thought; he was going to show Olive that when he had offered himself to her that time in Lattimore, he was giving her a chance to redeem him, to make something of his life, and that without her it was worthless to him; and he would show those men who courted her and caressed her and were allowed to madden him by their intimacies, that—and here he entered upon the realm of haze and murk again. The strange thing about the matter is, that all this time he carried on the routine of his office with only such slight aberrations of attention and judgment as came quite within the powers of his clerks to detect and remedy. His case calls for the severest condemnation: but one may perhaps pity even a wolf when trapped and tearing himself.

When he returned, Mr. Grant found that the party had broken up, and that his wife and Brayton had gone home with Olive.

"She was regularly flabbergasted," said Smith. "Who was the big duffer, Grant? One of the Amalgamated Order of Dearwester Wrecks, eh? or just a case of plain dipsomania?"

"Oh, he's a nice fellow," responded Grant. "I know him as a golfer, principally, and he's in my regiment of militia. There's nothing to this, except a one o'clock A. M. freak. We put him in his cab, and he'll wonder in the morning where he's been."

Olive, however, suddenly went from cruel indifference as to Jack Bloodgood's doings and feelings, to a stark terror of the man. She made no explanations to

Mr. Brayton, or to her other companions of the evening, but she sent for Morgan and told him that Jack Bloodgood had gone crazy, and that she was afraid of him.

"I can't have him acting so," said she. "Can't something be done, Morgan?"

"I can't see," answered Morgan, "that he has done anything which justifies drastic measures on our part. He put his hand on Mr. Brayton's shoulder, and he looked at you. Grant thinks he was a little deep in his cups. Under such cir—"

"Morgan, I tell you that the man was not intoxicated!" cried Olive. "His eyes had a staring appearance, and a glare. There wasn't a single trace of the leer of drunkenness. He looked like a dead man galvanized into life. That man hasn't slept for so long that his knees tremble under him. He doesn't know what he sees. Morgan, I'm afraid of him."

"You must stay close," said Morgan, "and always go out well accompanied. It won't be often that you'll run any chance of meeting him at night; and there'll be scarcely more likelihood in the daytime, and after a while he'll get over it."

"Morgan," answered Olive, "it is at night that I fear him most!"

Then she told him how she had taken up the study of the unseen life of the great city—not the so-called "seamy side," but the aspect to which the world shuts its eyes. For many nights, she had gone out with one of her maids and watched from some point of vantage the crowds of men who walk the city at night.

"They flow along the streets," said she, "like a fearful river of misery. They come in, from what dens

and lairs I have no idea, and take the place of the prosperous crowds of the day. They remind me of ghosts that once were men. They seem to have no blood in their veins, no light in their eyes. When the snow sweeps before the wind, as it did last night, they hurry, hurry, hurry as if the wind itself carried them along. I look into every face as it passes, and I have not yet seen one ray of hope, except as my glance has roused them to the point of begging. Some are coming to look for my appearance now, and to rely upon my alms. Where do they come from, Morgan, and where do they go?"

"I know of them," said Morgan. "Every newspaper man who works nights knows them. They are the men who have no home, and not even a bed in a doss-house. When the weather is warm they drop down and sleep in areas, in doorways, or in parks; but in winter they have no place to go. So they drift from one saloon to another all night."

"Why don't they stay in the same one?"

"As soon as they have stayed a few minutes, so that the barkeeper is quite sure they are not going to buy drink, and especially whenever they drop to sleep, they are driven out. They pass the whole night, and one night after another, in this dreary drift from one place of warmth to another, too thinly clad to stand for a moment in the open air, and kicked out in the street—literally kicked out—if they overstay the time allowed them, or underestimate the shortness of the barkeeper's temper. They are lost men, those who have descended into hell."

"How do they get lost?" asked Olive whisperingly. Morgan looked at her curiously. This interest in



her unfortunate fellow-men, so absorbing and intense, was something new in Olive.

"They are men," said Morgan, "who have been beaten and bruised by the competition of the struggle for existence, and have given up. Some of them are thieves; but they have no resolution for any daring crime. Most of them are working-men who have lost their hold upon employment either from the failure of some strike, or by reason of bad habits, or because their age exceeds the limit of the corporation rules. They are dead men, killed by fenced-up opportunities, by an unjust social system—and in the end by their own weaknesses."

"Would a man without a trade, without friends, with influential enemies, and driven from his profession," asked Olive slowly, "be likely to fall to this—here in Chicago?"

Morgan took a long time in forming his answer; during which he solved to his satisfaction the riddle of her interest in the world of the lost and outcast.

"He might," he replied at last. "It would be quite possible. But, Olive, you mustn't go about the streets like this, not for any reason. Have you seen the—the women that drift with them?"

"No," answered Olive, "I have not seen them. . . . Morgan, I must watch this stream of men. I can't sleep unless I do. . . . And, last night, I'm quite sure, now, John Bloodgood was following me about with that corpse-like face and those staring eyes. You must stop him, Morgan!"

"No," said Morgan quietly, and so steadily that Olive did not hear the sadness in his voice. "I can't stop him, but I can go with you. Promise me that

you won't go out on this quest—this study, I mean—without me.”

“Oh, Morgan, if you only would! It takes a load of fear and—nervousness from my mind! And you can put it all into a book that will horrify and shame the world that such things can be, can't you, Morgan?”

“To be sure I can,” he answered. “We'll go out after material this very night, after the opera. You can help me greatly. I've long contemplated something—something of the sort.”

Thus began the strange quest in following which Olive and Morgan grew closer and closer in heart and mind, and which yet proved to him how far removed she was from his hope. They haunted the streets like shadows, the stocky, brown-eyed man, and the tall, closely veiled woman. The police grew to know them, and to sympathize in a rude sort of way with their search. They made the rounds of the cheap lodging-houses, and scanned the crowds who waited outside the newspaper offices with pennies in their hands to buy the first issue, read the “want ads” and run races with one another to places where help was wanted. Everywhere they made inquiries calculated to bring out matter suitable for Morgan's book. Did men with professions often fall to the necessity of coming to the place? Ministers, for instance? Did any of them seem to have any idea as to the cause and cure of poverty? What sort of person was he in appearance? If the answer was that he was short and dark, Olive's interest flagged. Evidently she did not care for such as features of Morgan's book. She seemed like one who sought something definite, ever failed to find it, and was more glad than sorry that she failed—like the

searcher for bodies of the drowned, who feels the anxiety lift as each gruesomely successful draft reveals the faces of strangers only.

As for Morgan, he never hinted that he saw through her innocent attempt at deception. His search was as careful and interested as her own. He was with her, night by night, and this was much. In addition to these incentives to interest, the appearance in dark angles of a towering form, and meetings in emerging from blind streets or alleys or on making sudden doubles upon their tracks with a gigantic figure carrying a dead-pale face and hollow, staring eyes, added a little sense of danger to their excursions, as if they were being stalked by some beast of problematical ferocity.

"Altogether," said Morgan to himself, "the situation can't remain thus for ever."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE STRANGLE-HOLD

"There ought t' be some lah," observed Mrs. Burns, "t' fix it so whin a man's brought up to a gintleman's life, he could lave off work anny time he felt like it if he got down in his luck like."

"Not havin' been brought up that way," replied Mr. Burns, "it don't look good to me."

"No, I'll swear it don't," she rejoined. "Ye'd be much likelier to go out an' lose ahll y'r job, be agitatin' f'r havin' it cut down be an hour'r two a day; an' gettin' slugged be Barney Hagan an' his gang o' cut-throats—"

"The traitors!" ejaculated Burns. "The bought sons—"

"—An' if yeh win," went on Mrs. Burns, "yeh have only gained the chance of spindin' two hours more time an' a little less money at the Sarsfield Buffet—"

"Who, me, Mollie!" exclaimed Mr. Burns protestingly.

"I'm usin' yeh as a sample of a teamster," answered Mrs. Burns with an affectionate look. "While I've nawthin' to complain of in yeh specially, it's maybe because what I don't know don't hurt me. But the hours yeh worrk don't amount to annything, used as yeh arre to twistin' brakes an' pumpin' a hand-car ahll y'r life till ye got y'r thrain to run. But it's

enough to break one's haire to see a man like Mither Coortright, goin' to worrk like some shanty-bred fardown, airly in the marnin' wid his dinner in his pail, an' he so soft and swate an' gintle, like a gurrl on the day of her first Holy Communion—an' goin' off in the marnin' like he's goin' to a child's hangin', an' comin' back at night lookin' like death—it's wrong, Tim Burns! It's bitther wrong, an' the lahs that let it go so 'll pay fer it some day, you'll see thot!"

"Yeh think that way," answered Burns, "because he's got them blue eyes an' brown curls an' red cheeks, an' a kind of a soft way o' tockin'. But as f'r strenth, he could break me in two and throw the pieces across the street."

"He could," assented Mrs. Burns, "maybe; but the thing that makes it different wid him is that it would hurrt him more to do ut than it wud ye to be broke and trun across. An' this worrk o' his—ivery rough thing he handles is like cinders to a blistered hand. It's dith to him. He can't shtand ut. Why does he do such worrk, whin he could do betther? An' the job he's got—God save us, Tim, it's enough to dhrive the poor man crazy!"

Mr. Burns leaned back on the rear legs of his chair and used his toothpick quite shamelessly. The husband and wife were at their evening meal. Their lodger had come home early and was sleeping the deep sleep of one who had spent a night in wakefulness and stress, and a day in strenuous labor. His custom was to take his breakfast with the Burnses, but his luncheon at a restaurant where they made a specialty of "the pail trade," and eat his combined dinner and supper where and when hunger overtook him. Some-

times he had gone to the Hull House tables for dinner, and spent an hour or so in the library there, and feasted his soul upon the sense of home in the furniture and atmosphere of that wonderful corner of the slums, cleaned and purified by the life-work of one great woman. Once Emerson had been drawn into a discussion of the problem of poverty, and had made the statement that Hull House itself, beautiful and splendidly useful work of the Christ spirit that it is, in so far as it had any economic effect, made the struggle harder, as all localized palliatives must always do, for those in the neighborhood, by enabling landlords to sell its advantages to tenants in increased rents; and therefore, to those who did not use its privileges, it worked an absolute disadvantage—and then on seeing the hurt and puzzled look with which this utterance was received by those sweet spirits who were devoting themselves to this philanthropic work, he had lapsed into silence, and in this place had ever after held his peace. Even here, he thought, the word of truth could not fail to bring, not peace, but a sword; and after there had appeared in a great newspaper an editorial suggesting that conservative capitalists might well refrain from donations to Hull House until it showed itself free from alliance with those who attacked capital, he went still more infrequently, because he felt that his work lay yet nearer the core of the problem than did that of the great social settlement, which, after all, was only a dole of plutocracy, seasoned, it is true, with the sweet savor of self-immolation, but still only a charity, not making for justice. On the open squares, at the street corners, in the labor halls, he could speak the truth with no fear

of tearing down the work which was well meant, and which seemed good to good men. He could get up, presently, and go with Tim Burns to the meeting of the Teamsters' Union with no feeling that he was doing incidental harm to any one's dream even of reform. Meanwhile, Mr. Burns uses his toothpick and perpend Mrs. Burns' query as to why Mr. Court-right engaged in such terrible work.

"It's easy to see," answered Tim, "why he hunts up a job like the wan he's holdin' down. Here's where he is, Mollie, when I runs into him over at the street meetin' in Washington Square, an' knows him f'r our best friend in the A. R. U. strike—"

"An' bad 'cess to the A. R. U. shtrike," interposed Mrs. Burns, "that lost yeh y'r run, an' made us the common lab'ers we arre!"

"Not a bit of it!" retorted Burns. "It takes more brains an' skill in an hour drivin' a dray on South Water than in a week of runnin' first in, first out, of Lattimore. I'm a skilled man, Mollie; but that's wand'rin' from the point. Mr. Courtright's in Chicago full of his plans f'r doin' what he says the blessed Saint Francis of Assisi wanted to do. He has the true gospel. He has tried it out in all the granger Protestant churches, an' they won't have it. Neither would the cities. The bosses of the churches are cap-pers f'r the capitalists, an' care nothin' f'r the poor except to make 'em 'get saved' accordin' to plans that won't bust up the capitalists' graft. He argyes that unless you bust this up, there ain't no way of savin' the people, or gittin' 'em to look out f'r their souls, more than the price of a mass 'r so after the wake. I dunno how this is, but it looks reasonable to me. Annyhow,

he's lost more jobs than he c'n remimber. He's on a church black-list. The lab'rin' people are too sore on the standard-gage religion to care about lookin' at his goods, an' they won't come to a preacher's meetin's. So he says to me, 'Tim,' says he, 'get me a job, won't you?' 'What f'r a job c'n I git you?' says I. 'I can drive a team,' says he. 'You can't get into the Union,' says I, 'an' it's too hard work.' 'Get me a job,' says he, 'where the Union won't keep me out, and where the work is the hardest you can find. The men won't listen to me, now,' says he, 'because I'm not really one of them. Jesus was a carpenter,' says he, 'and belonged to the carpenters' union, I've no doubt, and when He talked to the people they couldn't say that He never did a day's work in His life, and was out for an easy life. I must be one of the masses, Tim,' says he, 'and must suffer in the body as they do, and show them that I can take hold of manual labor,' says he, 'by its roughest end with my bare hand. When they see me do the hardest tasks, they'll respect me,' says he, 'and maybe open their hearts to my message.' "

"Poor man!" sighed Mrs. Burns.

"An' then I gets him into the gang where he is, through Rabinowski's pull. An' because he's the strongest man in the house, an' the stiddiest in the nerve, an' the keenest in the eye, they've put him where he is. An' it's good wages he gets, an' manny a man would like to have that same job. It ain't a lady's job, I'll admit; but—"

And Mr. Burns finished his dissertation with a shrug which may have meant almost anything.

"I sometimes think," said Mrs. Burns, "that a man



like him might soon learn the catechism, and do penance f'r his heresies, an' afther a while be priested—God forgive me if it's blasphemy to think it; an' thin he could preach the thrue gospel in the thrue church!"

"I've thought of that, too, Mollie," responded Tim, "an' then I've thought of what they done to Father McGlynn. I guess the plutocrats have the controllin' interest in the stock of the true church, too..... Maybe I'd better call him, if he's goin' with me to the meetin'."

A tap at Courtright's door was answered by so prompt a "Yes, Tim! I'll be with you in a minute," that there was some doubt as to his having been asleep at all. He came out into the little living-room in a few minutes, dressed in his clean ready-made suit, his hands washed to a pinkish brown, his face smooth from the razor. He looked like a fine, intellectual working-man in his Sunday best, except for the soft roll-collared shirt, to which a touch of dressiness was added by the dark scarf with its loose knot and sprigs of crimson flowers. His calloused palms and shattered finger-nails, his iron frame hard-swelling under his clothes, were enough to secure acquittal from his fellows of the charge of industrial parasitism, while his well-ordered laborer's dress with the little concessions to adornment, gave the touch of superiority in appearance which was the more effective in its appeal because it came from self-respect and cost little but effort. A handsome man, an artist would have said, in the mere matters of form and feature; but a real artist would soon have forgotten that, in contemplation of the pathos of the blue eyes, the tender set of the lips, which parted and closed

with a faint suggestion of a quiver, the slight tremolo in the round, resonant voice. Tim Burns and his wife looked at him and then at each other as if to convey messages of the sort we exchange at sick-beds. And yet, there was nothing of complaint in his word or manner.

"Hello, Tim!" said he, as he came into the room. "I'll have to get another call-boy, if you don't wake me a little earlier. Good evening, Mrs. Burns; why don't you make this man keep his word?"

"Make nawthin'!" ejaculated Mollie. "I'm satisfied if I make him kape out o' jail!"

"You know you was in this, Mollie," replied Tim. "You said 'Lave 'im sleep, an' I'll have his supper ready when he wakes.'"

"You mustn't do this so often," protested Emerson. "Living's too high, and I don't pay you enough for my room and breakfast anyhow. I know—I know!" he went on, as Tim and Mollie began strenuous assertions that it was little enough they could do for him, and what was living if you couldn't do something for a friend? "I know; but you mustn't do it so often, or I shall have to leave you, and live down beyond the bridge."

"I think I see yeh!" responded Mollie. "An' I think I see Tim Burns lettin' yeh! Come, Mr. Coort-right, set up an' ate, 'r you'll be late f'r this meetin' o' Tim's."

Emerson ate with the manner of a man whose digestion is good and whose occupation is not sedentary—with appetite; and yet abstemiously. Sometimes, indeed, his eyes became fixed upon vacancy, and he sat with his hands resting on the table, forgetful of

his surroundings, until Mrs. Burns brought him to with an offer of some dish as yet untouched; or Tim growled out an awakening suggestion to Mollie to warm up Mr. Courtright's tay.

"I saw Olive last night," said Emerson. "Miss Dearwester, you know."

"I didn't think," said Mrs. Burns, "that yeh iver wint to the theayter. Tim an' I've wondhered if we mightn't go sometime. I s'pose she's fur finer'n what she used to be."

"I s'pose she's not!" responded Tim. "She was the smoothest thing in skirts on this ball o' dirt, at anny stage o' th' game, she was!"

"I didn't go to the theater," answered Emerson. "I went to see my—my little girl last night. I saw little Mildred for a few moments—I'll tell you about it sometime. I stole up the stairs. It was up at General Hess', and they were having a great reception. And Olive was with her—with Mildred—singing to her and putting her to sleep—"

"Do you mane to say," asked Mrs. Burns, "that you had t' sneak in to see y'r own child?"

"Does that damned court order still hold good?" inquired Tim. "In Illinois?"

"An' how come she there wid thim vipers an' serpints?" interrogated Mollie, "if she's a frind o' yours?"

"I've wondered about that myself," answered Emerson slowly. "But she said she went to sing. We had time for only a few words, when they raised the alarm—some one saw me going up, and I guess Amy—Mrs. Courtright—had cautioned the servants to be watchful. Olive stood at the door and kept them

from following, for a while, and when they were trying to arrest me, she took me into her automobile and as far as Indiana Street, where I took a car home. There's some explanation for her being there. She's my friend, yet; and the loveliest woman I ever saw."

"What f'r a dress did she have on?" began Mollie.

"Now, none o' that!" cried Tim. "Ye c'n take that up on a legal holiday, 'r wait f'r the eight-hour law. It's time we was travelin', Mr. Courtright, f'r the Teamsters' Hall. Git y'r hat."

Down two flights to the street they went, and up a few steps to the sidewalk. Twenty children were about the narrow veranda, calling to one another in broken English, and in some jargon which was meaningless to Burns and Emerson. Several of the little ones rushed to take Emerson's hands as he went toward the street, and one little dark thing in ragged clothes grimy with street dirt, he took in his arms, cuddling her cold hands under his chin. When he got to the pavement, he stood a little while holding her to his breast and warming her before he delivered her to her mother, a dun-colored woman in a shawl, who was coming in. Then he ran on after Burns, who was looking back at the corner.

"What's this about Barney Hagan's gang?" he asked of Tim as they walked on. "What are they trying to do?"

"Tryin' to airn their pay," answered Burns, "that's all. The Shipper Association is out to bust up the Teamsters' be buyin' the officers of the Union. We're a hard lot to handle, an' nobody but Jim Connors could've hilt us together so long. So Barney Hagan's

took the contract of illictin' Pat Burke in Connors' place. We're votin' on the matter now, an' up to date Connors is ahead; but you know what Barney Hagan an' his gang is—they'd crack the head o' th' bishop an' carry off the communion service if they was paid f'r it; an' they don't rightly know the force o' moral suasion, an' so don't use it much. I guess you didn't have annythin' quite so near the real thing up in Idaho. The debate they start won't be mild and reasonable, ye c'n bet on that."

"Tim," said Emerson, as they went up the stairs to the hall, "if the laboring people can't rise superior to graft and corruption in their own councils, what hope is there left? There is no organized uplift or aspiration in labor circles, except in the unions. The church is actively non-Christian—all the churches, as organizations. Capitalism permeates them all, and directs their energies. The schools and colleges are corrupt and unashamed; even the public schools can give no help to the cause of Jesus, until it can count a majority in the elections. And now come the unjustly rich and use their money to corrupt the unions themselves! If they succeed, what hope is there left?"

"Give it up," answered Tim. "Well, le's go in!"

The hall was fairly filled with men, all smoking, all tanned and weathered by their work in the streets, and some as black as negroes with the coal or coke or other freight with which they had come in contact in their day's work. At the desk at the back of the long room was a ballot-box, and about it the officers whose duty it was to conduct the election. Many of the men were sitting about the sides of the room on chairs placed next the wall, some were stand-

ing in groups and conversing in a suppressed way which, with the gravity of their demeanor, and the forced laughter which occasionally broke the stillness, filled the atmosphere with a sense of stress which almost amounted to fear. Burns moved slowly forward toward the rostrum back of the ballot-box, exchanging scraps of earnest conversation with some whom he met, and light badinage with others.

"Anythin' doin'?" he inquired anxiously, of a little man with a huge black mustache.

"Looks like it," was the reply, in a suppressed tone. "Barney's gang seems to be comin' in a bunch."

A tall teamster with a whitish-yellow beard, and carrying in his hand an oaken dray stake, leaned over to speak in Burns' ear.

"Black Yack Enright bane hare," he said, "with the cellar gang from Blue Island Avenue."

"All right, Petersen," said Burns, "we'll remember about it."

Burns took Emerson aside, and talked to him with a nonchalant smile, his eyes meanwhile roving the room as if taking stock of the strength of the two factions, his lips white with tense mental stress.

"I don't believe," said he, "that the gang here is in the frame o' mind to sop up doctrines of love an' sweetness, Mr. Courtright. We're cut up into about three parts. One is f'r Connors an' knows what's up. The other's f'r the Shippers' Association, an' Black Jack Enright's here to lead 'em in some deviltry with the 'lection—to spile the election 'r rush the box, yeh see. There's quite likely to be some onclerical proceedin's. Hadn't yeh betther duck in a dignified way, while they's time?"

Emerson looked up and smiled.

"I know how these things go—" he began.

"In Chicago?" asked Burns anxiously. "D'ye mind how Herman Schroeder was knocked down an' give the boots by this same band o' bought thugs las' spring, an' is now waitin' f'r death, stomped to a jelly in his head an' stomach? They're bad ones. When y'r down, it's to yeh with the leathers."

"I'll stay," answered Emerson. "I may be able to do something in—in winning over the undecided third."

Burns said no more, but called the meeting to order at once. Courtright sat beside the rostrum in the place of honor conceded to the visitor. A hard-visaged man with bristling black hair and angular jaws, blue with a heavy growth of new-shaven beard, sat a few seats back, looking Courtright over critically as an athlete scans an antagonist. He was nearly of the same size as Emerson, and his swelling neck flaring to the big shoulders, his battered and amorphous nose, and the scars which spangled his face, gave him a forbidding and formidable appearance, accentuated by a strange pallor and a curiously flat chest oddly incongruous with his look of steely strength. All the time he scrutinized Emerson with that look of sinister inquiry.

"They've brought a bruiser," he whispered to a man by his side.

"He's a socialist spieler, 'r a single-taxer," was the reply; "Burns brung him to make a talk."

"Talk, hell!" answered Black Jack in high disdain, resuming his examination. "Him! Humph!"

When Burns, with the formal correctness of speech

to which the laborer rises when placed in any position of dignity, announced that they had with them to-night a brother, Mr. Courtright, who had done much, as they might have heard, to unionize his own shop-mates down on the South Side, and who would speak to them on matters relating to labor, Black Jack turned to his friend, puzzled, and whispered, "Wouldn't that jar yeh! *That* man a spieler!"

Emerson's orator's voice and grace of diction and gesture completed the reassurance of Mr. Enright. This strong-looking man was, after all, only a talker; the keen perceptions of Mr. Enright detected in him faint reminders of the pulpit, and he slightly dismissed him as a factor in the proceedings; as he went on from his exordium, in which he spoke of his own work in the ranks of labor, of the growth of unionism, of the problems before them in Chicago, to the need of reform and purification and higher ideals in the movement itself.

"If we carry this work on in the belief that unionism will solve the labor question," said he, "we shall one day find our hope vain, and we of all men most miserable. Unionism is just a frail barrier set up to hold back the rising waters of capitalism, and unless we find a way to divert that mounting flood, it will surely tear down our puny dam. Even now, here in Chicago, in this room, under our very eyes, the agents of our enemies are corrupting our own people."

"That's so!" "You're right!" shouted the men of the Connors faction; and as the speaker went on telling them of the evidences of bribery and intimidation and graft in Chicago unionism, the uninformed and vacillating third became more and more identified in



sentiment with the Connors faction. The orator said nothing of Pat Burke, of Barney Hagan, or of Black Jack Enright; but the very sweep of his indictment against corruption carried the open-minded over to the side of Burns, whose face could not conceal his satisfaction at the effect of Emerson's speech. Black Jack began anew his scrutiny and estimate of the speaker, as a factor in the problem of the evening.

"If we unionize for higher wages only," he cried, "or for mere selfishness, we shall fail. Selfishness with millions back of it must overcome selfishness barehanded; and we shall surely fail. We must know more of the unchangeable laws of wealth and poverty, more of the leveling and leavening power of justice, more of the law of love, more of the sweetness and salvation of sacrifice than the capitalists know, or our work is in vain and harmful. Back of the ranks of unionism, is the mob of unskilled labor ready to bid down the unions to their death. They may know that our cause is theirs; but they have hungry children. When the champions of the open shop say that these people have the right to work, they are right. Unionism is a kind of warfare, an appeal to force, and has its side of sin and wrong and oppression just as all things have, in the wrongfulness of our social system. We must use it, like an army, making its oppressiveness work for peace and the abolition of oppression, or we are blind and mischievous disturbers. The highest law is justice—in lands, in highways, in opportunity for self-employment. We must bring about the reign of justice and of unselfishness before plutocracy grows all-powerful; or our civilization must go back to that state worse than barbarism which comes with the dy-

ing of great nations. The truths of Jesus are the only things which can save us—the real truths from His own lips, not sterilized churchianity. Justice and love are the same, if we—”

“That’s sickly sentimentalism!” cried a voice from the audience, the protest of a socialist. “Give us economic determinism, and the class struggle!”

“I give you the real economic determinism,” cried Emerson, adopting the shibboleth of the doctrinaire, “when I say to you that the body must be fed before the spirit. I give you the real class struggle, when I call those who hate evil to a march for the uplands of economic justice—whether millionaire or pauper, bourgeois or proletary. I give you the only practicable life when I say that he who would save his life must lose it; that for our own sakes we must love our fellow-man better than ourselves; that our very labor organizations must work to bring on the time when their lives as unions shall be lost in that day of liberty when employment shall be so free that no one will care for his job, when none will take thought how many hours his free brother shall choose to work, when the only labor union shall be the brotherhood of those who seek in labor to express those spiritual truths to which they shall at last be free to give their souls! This will come as light follows darkness when the land shall be his who uses it, and every highway once more the king’s highway, and the common man the king!”

Black Jack Enright, his elbows on his knees, looked sneeringly at this fervid prophet of the dawn, his face sometimes expressing faintly the wonder he felt to know what the idiot was driving at. The audience

drank in the speech, some of them unable to comprehend a word, but charmed by the poetic symbolism to which the speaker rose as he finished his address without further interruption. It was a sermon to which they listened, a new sort of sermon teaching an old faith, an appeal for the religion which was now, as in the beginning, driven to the deserts, the crannies, the caves and catacombs of society for its forum.

“I may astonish you,” said he, “when I say that the labor problem can never be solved except by a great religious revival; but that is because you have forgotten through priestcraft, and parson-craft, what religion is. Once I was much closer to that craft than I am now, and one of the things that brought me to the point of embracing Christ and leaving the church was something I read in a queer book in which everything was pictured under the disguise of clothes, a book many of you have read, I suppose, *Sartor Resartus*. ‘In our Era of the World,’ it reads, ‘these same Church-Clothes,’ meaning the church, you know, ‘have gone sorrowfully out-at-elbows: nay, far worse, many of them have become mere hollow Shapes, or Masks, under which no living Figure or Spirit any longer dwells, but only spiders and unclean beetles, in horrid accumulation, drive their trade; and the mask still glares on you with its glass-eyes, in ghastly affectation of Life,—some generation-and-half after Religion has quite withdrawn from it, and in unnoticed nooks is weaving for herself new Vestures, wherewith to reappear, and bless us, or our sons or grandsons.’ That meant to me, when I first understood it, that religion has gone from her old habitation, and, because she can not die, is appearing elsewhere. The old

hollow mask began to glare on me angrily, and the spiders stung me and the unclean beetles polluted my name with their filth; but still I sought for the new dwelling-place of religion. I was broken-hearted, because for a long time I had no clue; but now I know where she is. She is just where she always was, in the great movements which follow Christ by preaching good tidings to the poor, not elsewhere; and wherever men are gathered together in the name of economic justice, whether it be in church or labor hall, with incense and the sacramental wine or with tobacco and beer, there is the spirit of Jesus in the midst of them; and my message to you to-night is this, that when you meet, as you do, with the uplift toward industrial freedom in your hearts, you are even by that thrill toward universal love, baptized into the great Church of the Economics of Jesus!"

They crowded about him after his talk, some of them with tears running down their faces, their poor puzzled hearts gladdened by the assurance that their work was better than they thought. Burns pressed his hand, but kept his eyes fixed on Enright and the Hagan gang,—ominous conjunction of the force of love and hate, in this muddled world of ours! Presently, as Emerson, lifted up on the inspiration of his theme, was developing it to some of the men who pressed about him, he suddenly felt the support of their attention and sympathy withdrawn, and saw their eyes diverted to a group of new-comers who, joining those with Enright, were making their way in a compact body down the hall, with Black Jack in their midst. They gathered in front of the ballot-box, and Enright became their spokesman.

"These 're frinds of mine," said he to the election officers, "that ain't had a chanst to vote. They've come to do it now."

Emerson was ignorant of that turbulent fame of Enright which blanched the faces of those who knew it; and who saw in this demand the signal for a "rough house." He did not know that Enright's terrible temper, his bloodthirstiness, and his dissipations, had robbed him of his health and of dizzy pre-eminence in the prize-ring, and filled him with the bitterness which, in spite of the lung disease which it was said had attacked him, made him the terror of bar-rooms and the lower world, the wild beast of the West Side jungle, a hired agent of intimidation, a being whose enmity brought panic to men of more than ordinary resolution and fortitude. Yet Emerson knew, from the poise of the man's well-knit frame, the truculent smile on his face, the command in his voice, that in him the supporters of the established order in the union had a dangerous foe. Courtright stood aside as an onlooker. The two forces—Black Jack with his squad of braves, the rough crowd of teamsters who ranged themselves about Burns and before the ballot-box—stood for a moment looking each other in the eyes. Enright's gang outgazed the other, and some of the teamsters slouched off to the sides of the room, leaving the opposing forces nearer equal in point of numbers, but with the numerical preponderance still in favor of the men about the box.

"Have they got their cards?" asked Burns.

"To hell with th' cards!" snarled Enright. "Le' me at that box!"

"This thing has got to be done according—" It was the voice of Tim Burns, in a last appeal for regularity—the appeal which would keep the record straight, which would call most strongly upon the men; the supreme call of organized human effort for its life-giving current, Law. Enright, the embodiment of anarchy, leaped forward with a light spring like that of a leopard, and struck him down. The blow was so swift, so deft, so devoid of swing, that it seemed like a mere tap, delivered from the wrist or elbow; but it gave forth a thud like a hammer stroke on a spile. Burns went down in instant collapse, like a smitten bullock, and lay quivering. Emerson, with a cry of horror, sprang between Enright and his foes, taking Burns' place. Perhaps it was certainty of their eventual victory, or some command from Enright, which restrained the rush of the cellar gang to capture the box. At any rate, they held back for the moment, as Black Jack, his teeth bared in that snarling smile, faced Emerson in the ecstasy of brutal battle, all entranced at the prospect of the duel which could be seen to be inevitable. The men about the box saw in the new champion their commander, their hope. They knew that if they lost, it would be a shambles of trampled faces, booted heads, and ribs jumped on and crushed; for they knew the Hagan gang. They were not prepared to hope much from the man who had just spoken to them of the reign of love, until they saw the light in his eye, the high disdain with which he faced Enright and his men. Even then, they expected some appeal for justice or order; but the curly-haired preacher uttered none. Enright, with an obscene epithet, made a

second tiger-like leap, and aimed another blow. It was warded off, and his arm went past the averted head. In an instant, the two closed in a clench. Enright, with his blackened teeth, snapped at Courtright's ear like a wolf as the two big men rolled along the floor in a furious struggle, in which first one and then the other was under, their heavy boots crashing on the bare boards as they turned. Enright, struggling to break the clench, was held time after time by his antagonist, who seemed to have divined, somehow, that his foe was not a wrestler, but a boxer. Up again to their feet they struggled, but before Enright could deliver his blow, Emerson was at him, seizing him in a deft clutch and skilfully avoiding the rough-and-tumble fighter's vicious kick.

The cellar gang gazed in wonder. The man who had spoken to them such soft sentiments, seemed to be Enright's equal in strength; but so well they knew that fearful short-arm blow that they waited, confident that their leader's chance would come. They looked at one another in anxiety once, when Emerson, slipping his hands inside Enright's arms and over his neck, secured the dreaded "double-Nelson"—and they breathed easier, as their man, with a terrific, tossing movement of the shoulders, broke the hold, and turned on Courtright, his face set and venomous with rage. And then, like lightning, coming in under another blow, Courtright threw the man across his hip, and caught the great neck in the hollow of his right arm, the wrist of which he clasped with his left, fixing Enright's head as in a vise.

"Now," said Emerson, panting, "I want you to give up—I can kill you—I can break your neck!"

For reply Enright frenziedly strove to break the hold, to kick, to bite, or blindly to strike his foe in the face. His breathing coming now for the first time in gasps, gave his followers the alarm. They realized that the fatal strangle-hold could not be broken.

"Let up on that!" roared the burly fellow who had led the latest arrivals. "That hold's barred, see?"

As he spoke he drew a revolver and aimed at Courtright's head, with the muzzle at a foot's distance; and even as he aimed, the oaken dray stake in the hands of the tall Swede fell with fearful force; the forefinger across the grip of the pistol was crushed, muscle and bone; the pistol flew over among the feet of the Connors crowd, and Enright's lieutenant shrank back, shaking his disabled hand in agony.

"I tank," said Petersen, "dat hol' bane bar', too!"

As Petersen spoke, the contest ended. A wrenching, strangling movement of Courtright's arm, a sudden limp collapse of Black Jack's whole body, and Emerson laid the man gently down, looking up in horror as he noted a thin fountain of blood flowing from the grim mouth. And then the blue-eyed apostle of love stepped across the prostrate body and faced the gang again.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE MAN IN CRIMSON

For a moment the cellar gang and Emerson Court-right confronted each other in act to close again in fight; but the fierce and menacing aspect of Petersen with his bludgeon, the astonishing prowess of the preacher, the returning resolution of the teamsters, all acted to augment the irresolution which fell upon them with their leader's defeat; and they shrank back, experienced gang-fighters that they were. The sharp crescendo of the bell of a patrol wagon sounded in the street far off, and those nearest the door fled. Then they all melted like water before the teamsters' charge, and in a moment every intruder was in full flight. There was a crush at the head of the stairs, and the last of them went down in a crashing tumble from the top to the bottom, picked himself up in an instant, and was gone. When the police came leisurely into the room, they saw Tim Burns dazedly sitting on the floor with Petersen and the man with the black mustache examining his jaw to determine if it were broken, and wiping the blood from his ear whence it was oozing as a result of Black Jack's terrible blow.

A brown-haired man, somewhat better dressed than the rest, was holding the close-cropped head of En-right on his knee, bathing the brow of the apparently unconscious man with water from a pail, and stanch-

ing with a handkerchief the flow of blood from his lips.

"Can you hear me?" he was saying, his lips to the bully's ear. "Come, friend, rouse yourself! Wake up, for God's sake!"

"What's the row here?" asked the officer, as the squad, considered necessary in responding to any call from a disturbance at a teamsters' meeting, filed into the hall.

"The Barney Hagan gang come in to rush the ballot-box in the Connors-Burke 'lection," answered the man with the black mustache. "They got trun out. Tim Burns here got slugged by Black Jack Enright, but he's comin' round all right."

"Who's the guy cryin' over his friend?" asked the officer, "an' who's the man laid out? What's happened to make all this mess, anyway?"

"He's fainted," was the reply. "The man waitin' on 'im is a fellow that lives with Burns. I forget his name; but he's all right. He's a visitor here to-night—don't belong. We'd 'a' been cleaned out 'f it hadn't been f'r him. He pretty near broke Jack's neck, and I guess he's killed him. That put the gang on the bum. It was a beautiful fight. Jack keeled over an' hain't come to yet. Better frisk 'im f'r his gun before he wakes up. Wouldn't it jar yer to see how bad the feller seems to feel? I'd be sorry his neck wasn't broke, if it—"

"Who's fainted?" cried the officer. "Not Jack! Whose neck did Jack hurt? He ought to be glad to get off alive. Is this the man you wanted searched for a—why, condemn my soul! it's Black Jack, bleedin' like a steer! Send in a call f'r the amb'lance,

Bill. Who started this? No one man ever done this, y' know."

"I did it," said Emerson.

"He did it!" answered the teamsters.

"Got the strangle-hold on him, as I tol' you," reiterated the man with the black mustache.

The officers gathered about with judiciously moderate expressions of incredulity and admiration. Two of them began turning Enright over for the purpose of taking away any weapons he might have, moving him ungently, at which Enright groaned dismally. Emerson, like a mother protecting her child, seized the cruel hand, and gripped it as in a vise.

"Let me lift him," said he; "I can do it without hurting him."

"Well," said the officer, "you needn't mind about takin' my hand off! I may need it. Holy cat! I don't doubt that you busted Jack's neck. Why didn't you take y'r thumb an' finger and pinch 'im in two? Say, I done 'im good; he's comin' to. Hello, Jack, how are yeh by this time? Run into a little taste o' the real thing, didn't yeh, Jack?"

Enright looked up at the man who was holding him, frowned wickedly, tried to sit up, fell back weakly, and then, in spite of pain, he flushed beneath the black of beard and skin as the situation dawned upon him. His left hand went slowly to his hip, and then wandered disappointedly to the side pocket of his coat. Looking malevolently at the policeman, he saw the weapon in his hands.

"It wasn't you that broke me," said he hoarsely. "God damn you. . . . It was a better man. . . . And I'll send 'im to hell f'r it! D'ye hear?"

. . . . . The cowardly sons of dogs run away, as soon's I'm down; chased by you dubs!"

He looked contemptuously at the teamsters; and turned his gaze toward Emerson.

"A labor spieler—nit!" he sneered. "I knows it's a damn lie, as soon's I see yeh! Stalled to a standstill, by these yaps!"

"Better shut up, Jack," said the officer. "He's the on'y one o' the bunch that's tried to do anythin' f'r yeh; an' he's lamed my hand becos I hurt y'r bum neck."

"The hell he did!" ejaculated Enright. "W'll, I'll get 'im all the same!"

"D'ye want a charge placed ag'in' him?" asked the policeman of Emerson. "Or do yeh think he's got his as it stan's?"

"No!" cried Emerson, "take him to a hospital, and have him attended to at once. It's some internal hemorrhage. Don't delay, don't delay, for mercy's sake! I'll come up to the station and talk further about it; but no charge, please, on my account. What good would it do him?"

Enright arose and walked unsteadily to the stairway, supported by two policemen, his nostrils pinched as with the pain and the repression of its evidences. A police surgeon came up from the ambulance, and ordered the patient to the hospital. Enright looked back at Emerson as he went down, with admiration and hate in his eyes.

"You're a good man," said he, "but I'll git you good and plenty yet!"

The election of Connors over Burke was attributed to the success with which the Connors faction suc-

ceeded, in this one meeting, in protecting the vote against violence. It was after this, it will be remembered, that the Hagan gang, more determinedly skilful in their career of violence, in this great wilderness of the West Side, walked masked into a room where a labor election was being held, and, with leveled revolvers, forced the men in attendance to turn their faces to the wall, tore up the ballots, and beat into insensibility and, in some cases, to ultimate death the officers who were conducting the balloting. The first battle of the civil war which capital has fomented in Chicago labor unions—capital, aided by the graft of faithless leaders—was the one in which Emerson Courtright got his war name, “The Strangler”—that evening when he preached to them of the reign of love.

That something out of the ordinary had occurred in the labor war was realized at the office of the *Observer*, where a first-page story was made of it. The managing editor showed it to Mr. Yeager.

“There ought to be something in this in your line,” said he.

Yeager read it carefully. He knew the general aspects of the situation well. He knew with fair certitude where the Hagan gang got the price of their efforts. It was a part of the general scheme to corrupt the unions with money, and rob them of the confidence of their members by making them unworthy of it. It involved on the part of certain respectable people, the dishonorable act of hiring some working-men to be false to their trusts; but that was a part of the game. He noticed the name of one “Kortright” in the story, and even looked up his

name, "Emory Kortright," in the directory—in the K's, and not in the C's—and never for a moment felt any sense of nearness to the end of his quest; the shadow of the event that almost happens. Then he turned to the managing editor.

"This will keep," said he. "I may take it up in my series on graft and corruption in the unions—if I ever get around to it. Now, you see, I have all I can do in getting up the data as to the big employers in their relations to city government. I'm at work on the Stock Yards district now—I'm going to have my first experience in the killing department as soon as I can get to it. But I'll keep these addresses, and use them if I need them."

"All right," answered the managing editor. "It looked pretty juicy to me; but you do as you like."

Morgan was growing in importance with the *Observer* management. His incisive articles on economic and civic themes were giving tone and direction to the thought of an enlarging clientele of readers. The monthly magazines were calling on him for contributions, more than he could find time to write. He was becoming a recognized specialist; and as he gained in strength with the world of thought and inquiry, he began the resumption of the old theme which had driven him from politics in the short-grass country, and made of him a tramp. It was as if he had suppressed the full-length statement of himself for all these years, that he might build a forum in which to speak the heart of his thought. Not that this forum was yet his; but he began to see how he was coming to it, and he was happier than he had been at any time in all his life. He said to himself that

this was because the way seemed opening to the effective utterance of his philosophy, the world's redemptive truth; but when he wished to feel the warmest glow of pleasure, he went to Olive, and followed that strange quest in the streets for the something which never was found.

After the episode in the Pompeiian room, and the weird, occasional nocturnal shadowing of the two by Bloodgood, Morgan and Olive grew closer to each other. She would sometimes cling to his arm with a pressure which remained as a thing to be thought about and considered and wondered over until she did it again. When they turned a dark corner or passed through some out-of-the-way alley, and especially when she saw coming toward them some very tall figure, or heard nearing them some overtaking footstep, she would cling to him thus, and draw him into an angle or passage until the thing of fear had passed. She called him her dear old fellow, her best friend, her brother. This latter, the most intimate word, somehow did not make Morgan more happy. After she used it, he did not see the way opening quite so clearly to that forum from which he could preach the redemptive gospel of the Prophet of San Francisco. Morgan's strong point, his critics and friends both said, was his cold and merciless logic—but he was not in all things so coldly logical. He could not have explained out of his John Stuart Mill the evidential connection, for instance, between the use of the term "brother" in this connection, and the likelihood of his finding that forum for the preaching of his gospel radicalism. The explanatory fact is that he had no thought now, politico-economic or literary,

which had not Olive Dearwester for its background. And through all, they intermittently persisted in their search, which never occurred to him as being in any way likely to affect his relations with her.

This curious cruising for human wreckage taught them many things. To Olive, it brought a revelation which horrified and transformed her. Algernon Brayton insisted that she was ruining herself for the stage, because she grew more and more dissatisfied with the great piece which had been written for her, *The Queen of Atlantis*, with its senseless progression of gorgeous stage-pictures, and its tawdry music, so "perfectly attuned to the prevailing taste in theater-goers."

"I tell you," she was saying to him, "that if Mr. Van Hoven's new opera is no better than this vulgar show, you may count me out of it!"

"But, my dear Olive—"

"I beg pardon, Mr. Brayton; you were saying—?"

And in something like this their quarrel always began, and always ended in abject surrender on Brayton's part, and his contriving of more of those dizzy little functions of theirs with that portion of the *haute ton* of art, literature and society which affects Bohemianism, and which for a while drew her away from her study of "sociological questions," as Brayton put it, and her pursuit of which he laid to her strange partiality for that stick, Mr. Yeager, the author of *The Incidence of Taxation* and a lot of revolutionary stuff for which respectable people could have no use. Yeager himself was respectable, of course, but, gad, he was impossible! He was like a death's head at such of their social occasions as he attended (because Miss Dearwester would have



him), except that a death's head wouldn't wet-blanket the most generous flights of artistic fellowship with those sarcastic remarks which seemed to refer to some private understanding between him and Miss Dearwester—if they had reference to anything outside of the fellow himself. She was ruining herself, by trailing around with that pessimist. Thus Mr. Brayton used to hold forth to little Odette Cassler, or her husband, Smith, in the wings or other secluded places. And all this time, the pessimist was seeing things—things of rose and gold in the flushing east of his heart's sky—which filled him with the divine optimism of well-being. How little Brayton knew what this man of ice could have done in the way of satire in his really normal state!

“I don't think you'd better go with me this afternoon.”

“Why not?”

It was Olive who asked the question of Morgan, one day after the time when Mr. Yeager had rejected the managing editor's suggestion as to following up the Teamsters' Union war, and decided to visit the packing-houses—a decision the execution of which had been postponed until now.

“There are things down at the Yards which you oughtn't to see,” answered Morgan. “I don't know what they are myself, but I've heard.”

“I shall go,” replied Olive. “I want to see the worst the working world has to show me. I need it as a foil to the spangles and chiffon, you know, and the colored lights, and the glory of the spot that follows me wherever I go, as I smile and pose so

as not to disappoint the people with the lorgnettes. I want to see the end of what I've begun. I've seen men and women, by hundreds and thousands, ground up and crushed in the mills of modern society, as we all do: and we manage to be quite happy while this goes on. If I am so shallow as to allow the sufferings of animals to affect me more than this, I want to know it. I'm going with you, just as we've planned."

"All right," acquiesced Morgan. "Put on a dress you don't care about, and wear heavy rubbers. But it isn't a nice thing to see, I'm told."

The touring-car took them to their destination right speedily, through neighborhoods the like of which had grown familiar to them in the recent past. The crowding of the laboring people about great hives of labor, the squalor of their poverty and unthrift and ignorance—it was all so dreadfully uniform! Morgan looked at it as the surgeon observes the subject on the operating-table, concerned only with its cure. Olive on this occasion felt more keenly than ever before the helplessness of the situation, the ominous growth of these conditions. It seemed to her that it had all arisen since those early years of hers out in the open penury of the plains, when she had known nothing of cities and their diseases. Always she had pretended to Morgan that she was interested in the things themselves; but really she had been looking for some one, and had not been thinking. Now, as the failure of her search continued, she remembered that here in Chicago was nothing more than what every great city in all the world's great cities could show, that her failure was because of the mag-

nitude of the wilderness in which it lay, and that these things were growing, like an inflammation, by the human blood pumped to these centers by the force which drives the heart of society, industrialism. A resentment grew in her breast, as against some baffling element, like an ocean or forest.

"We shall never find him, Morgan!" she said simply.


Morgan started; for it was her first reference to their real object. Then, after a while, he replied:

"We may not, of course. But if he lives, I think we shall."

"Lives!" she whispered. "I never thought—no, he will not die until I—until we meet again. I feel it. Have you ever thought why we are searching for him?"

"Because," answered Morgan, after another long pause, during which he wondered at her contradictory utterances, "because we owe it to ourselves to search him out, and help him, and stand between him and the roughness of the world, if we can. Because we want to take the place of those who have been false to him, and because we want his help. Because we love him!"

"That's right, Morgan," said she, pressing his hand. "Because we love him, just as he loves us—both of us! I'm glad you said that; because it's what I've thought so often, when we couldn't talk, because we were both thinking about the same thing, and weren't quite sure we thought alike. We do, Morgan, don't we? And isn't it splendid! And when we find him, we'll do for him the things that hearts like ours do for people they love—you and he and mommie and I,



a group of people who know—all but mommie, and she feels—the beginning of a new world. I'm not going to sing in Van Hoven's new piece, *Higgledy Piggledy*. So there!"

Again there was a long pause. Morgan was, with the return to the use of his logic, trying to picture the ideal group so sketched by his friend. The desolation of the theatrical world at the condemnation of *Higgledy Piggledy* by Dearwester evoked a faint smile on his face, and he passed on in his thought to something else.

"Yes," said he at last, "it is a fine thing to think of."

They went down Michigan Boulevard to Garfield, and then into the stock-yards' district from the back. Olive finished her outburst of long-delayed confidence, and her definition of her attitude toward their old friend, so exactly like Morgan's, as they arrived at the great abattoir.

Morgan hastened to explain to her the plan of these great shambles—how the cattle and hogs and sheep were unloaded from the freight-cars into that enormous congeries of pens, were there bought by the packers, were driven up those long, inclined and roofed-in lanes, to the very top story of the slaughterhouse, so that afterwards they would fall by their own weight from process to process until they were ready for the table. A strange eyeless dead-wall confronted them, immense like an Egyptian pyramid, colossal in size, mysterious as to use. Their guide had not yet come, and Morgan could not explain the purpose of this forbidding pile, where indeed all seemed inexplicable, chaotic and sinister. He knew,

however, what that long, unvarying, high-pitched scream was, which came from over in the huge building with the rows of small-paned windows; but he did not tell Olive, who was donning her mackintosh and goloshes.

"We can go up on the hog floor," said the guide, "and take a look in there—you won't want to stay long—and then go over and see how we handle the cattle. The beef crew quits pretty soon, so we'd better hurry, if you please."

He stopped a freight elevator which was going up, and they slowly rose to the top, seeing vistas of tanks, pipes, boilers, and steamy and greasy interiors as they passed floor after floor. Olive shuddered.

"I don't like the—the feel of it, very well," said she.

"The girls that come here to work feel that way at first," said the guide. "Some of 'em, anyway; but they soon get over it."

"What is that terrible noise?" asked Olive again, as the mingled screams of piled-up agonies pierced their ears nearer and keener.

"You'll soon see, ma'am," said the guide, as he stepped off upon the hog-killing floor. "Here it is, ma'am."


At first the steam and the hurrying confusion of men blurred the interior, so that all was indistinct. And then they saw. Somewhere back of the men, and below the floor, was the source whence the sound came. Dimly, like a moving impressionistic painting of some fearful engine, slowly rotated a great wheel, and from it seemed to come these sounds, which now could be separated from each other in

culminating cries of anguish, as if a thousand steel traps were snapping on creatures penned up for torture. As their eyes cleared, they saw that the dangling forms were those of swine, and realized that the trap was closing, every second, on a helpless animal; that theirs were the cries screamed so dolefully forth, hour after hour, from the building, as the poor beasts felt the clutch of the traps upon their legs, and were hoisted with diabolical deliberation, in a succession of pitiless tragedies, and carried, heads down, on the revolving "Ferris wheel," on to the place where each scream went suddenly broken and choked as something happened—something after which a spouting and reeking throat swung over toward the steaming tank, awaiting immersion in which hung a close-packed cluster of black carcasses, their blood-choked coughings and dying convulsions growing less and less, until they went rolling from their gyves of death into the scalding water.

The floor was dark with clotted and diluted blood, and blood spread in a coagulating mass of viscous red mottled with splotches of pink foam about the feet of the man who stood in front of the line of victims, which filed before him in inverted helplessness. As each one passed him, he seized it by the forefeet, spread the legs apart so as to expose the broad black throat, and then, with a single thrust, as skilful as the finest pass of a swordsman, his long keen knife went straight to the artery, and the spurt of crimson as it was withdrawn went unheeded over the man's clothes from waist to feet, as he mechanically pushed the slain brute by, and automatically reached for another—and all the time the great wheel rotated, and

out from below and behind came the volume of tortured screams, each moment bringing more and more throats before him for the knife. Hour after hour, day after day he stood there, the reek of gore in his nostrils, the screech of death in his ears—the king of slaughter, surrounded by his sanguinary helpers, who, with machine and cleaver and knife, urged on by shouted command and competing enginery, tore heads from bodies, ripped out bowels, dismembered frames, and sent off to some room where they hung cooling in long rows, the clean-scraped and eviscerated creatures brought here in thousands from green fields and pastures. But the central figure, the monarch of horrors to Olive's eyes, was the man with the knife, who, with the machine-like thrust, second by second smote from its rock of flesh the fountain of blood, and stood like an embodied emblem of carnage, in steam and reek and expiring clamor, a red angel of death, dripping gore from every finger, and bathed from head to foot in the tide of butchery.

The woman stood gazing at him in a dreadful fascination, and the real meaning of the scene grew clearer and clearer through the steam and confusion. He was straight and tall, and as he did his horrid work, she noted in him a devilish adjustment of means to end in every motion and turn of wrist and arm and torso which reminded her dimly of such exhibitions of graceful motion and strength as fencing and club-swinging—a strange mingling of grace and diabolism. In a way he seemed almost beautiful to her. And then a sickening thing happened—he looked at her. It was a mere glance, at first, a turning of the head in the easy double attention of the skilled work-



man, and then—he stood, his dreadful work accumulating before him, and looked her straight in the face as if he knew her; and—unspeakable thought!—the face seemed that of one she knew and loved as the most gentle being in the world. The eyes were blue, the hair, dark with sweat, or worse, was curly, and *he seemed to know her!* Her soul turned sick, and all went dark before her eyes. She reeled, and Morgan, watchful for something like this, threw his arm about her, and half carried her toward the stairway. He was unspeakably alarmed at her utter whiteness, her limp poverty of motion or volition.

The guide sprang to his assistance. Morgan, as they went down the lift, looked back, and once more his eyes met those of the man with the knife—met them in recognition; and as he did so, urged on by an oath from the boss, the butcher turned again to his work, and, as if in renunciation of any claim to fellowship, resumed in feverish haste and with undiminished skill that task which made him a terror and an abomination to the woman who had misguidedly penetrated to this chamber of horrors, and who was even now being borne from its precincts in a state like that of death at the mere sight of him; and which so set him off from his kind—as his kind once was counted—that the very friend for whose hand-clasp he had for so long yearned, turned from him in loathing, and went away without a word of greeting, or more than one half-incredulous glance of knowing—that glance in itself, indeed, enough to carry its supremest additional pang to the humbled, tortured soul and to account for the uncomprehending way in which he went through the remainder of his day.




The boss could not know that his foul blasphemy mingled in the mind of the man with the knife, with old memories of the use of the same words in sacred chant, that as his mind wandered in the half-trance of mental shock, he seemed to feel himself again a ministrant of religion. That long-drawn scream with its anguished cries and its broken, spouting extinguishment—that was the organ, pealing forth its anthem; and the liquid flood which covered and surrounded him, was an abysmal abasement and defilement of that of which the beautiful singer had sung so long, long ago, while the penitents came forward to the altar and struggled for pardoning grace. Could God, when He made man, have imagined and designed such abysses in his life as that which yawned between that time—and *this!*

## CHAPTER XXIX

### "BETTER TO REMAIN LOST"

Mrs. Burns was engaged in preparing the evening meal, pausing at every sound which might tell of the home-coming of her husband. She regarded the skilled labor of driving a dray in Chicago as a species of warfare from which her consort was quite as likely to return upon his shield as with it. The Hagan gang and the Shippers' Association she looked upon respectively as the feudal enemy and his retainers. She hated them both, but no more than her duty required of her, and for the purposes of war only. Tim was a warrior, the fight was a part of the day's work, and his broken head and lame jaw came with the wages. It was always the same. In the old country it used to be the Protestants, and then the landlords, and before them all, there were always people to fight and heads to crack. It would always be so, no doubt, and it little became an O'Malley (in whose traditions there were some stories to be told in whispered innuendo, about agents going under the wather when the rent was too strenuously insisted upon) to complain when her man got his part of the hard knocks, provided that he took them in the front of his face, as Mollie characteristically stated it, instead of in the back of it. At the same time, one couldn't help bein' onaisy, when the time came for him to get home—and what was that sound?

Mrs. Burns peered out of the side window upon the roof of the wooden hovel which sustained itself by leaning upon the brick tenement in which she lived, as if to detect some one in entering the flat from that way. A flock of sparrows fluttered away with a whir that made her heart beat quicker, and then she located the sound as having been the scraping of feet on the mat in the hall, and heard plainly the tap on the door which logically followed it. Opening the door, she saw standing there a well-dressed man who might have been young or middle-aged, but who certainly was not Tim or Mr. Courtright, being distinctly smaller in physical size, though stocky and well set up. He had good brown eyes, and grizzled hair, and somehow looked familiar. She at once acquitted him of being either a book agent, a solicitor for industrial insurance, a canvasser for wares sold on the instalment plan, or any other "fellow with a graft," and asked him in. Mr. Yeager was continually receiving unintended compliments of the sort. He had no difficulty in getting unequivocal replies to his questions, and therefore soon learned that she was Mrs. Burns, married to Tim Burns, though she was herself one of the O'Malleys, who were always better off than the Burnses, and that her husband was a teamster, but once had a better trade, being a conductor on the Halliday System at Lattimore, until he lost his run in the big strike, and like a fool as he was, was likely to lose his job now from strikes and unions and the like foolery from which men would be kept if they had the sense to take the advice of their wives, especially them that had wives of families better than their own—and then she was astounded to



have the gentleman seize her hand and shake it and press it, and was not unpleasantly horrified for fear that he was about to kiss her, an indulgence, however, which he denied himself.

"You're Mollie Burns," he cried, "the wife of Tim Burns, the conductor of the special train that carried Emerson Courtright from Angus Falls to Lattimore that time!"

"As we've quit the job," said she, "I'll admit I am."

"And you hunted Olive Dearwester up," he went on, "and told her how her good name was being taken from her by Courtright's enemies in the church; and warned her, you dear woman, you!"

"I did an' I am!" admitted Mrs. Burns. "But, sorr—"

"And you're the one person," went on Morgan, "whose presence in Lattimore would tempt her to return there—just to see you and thank you; and here you are in Chicago! Why, she'll be here to see you as soon as she finds out about it!"

"Arrah!" said Mrs. Burns. "An' she the great lady she is, wid her face—the purtiest face iv thim ahl, too—on ivery wahl in Chicago, an' the papers tellin' how she's a princess from away off somewhere! You flatter me, sorr. An' axin' yer pardon f'r a plain question—who might you be?"

"I'm Morgan Yeager."

"His fri'nd! His fri'nd!" and now the manifestations, and the approach to the tender salute, were on Mollie Burns' part. "A great day this'll be f'r Misther Coortright. A great day—"

"He lives with you? I came to find him. Where is he?"

"He might be here anny minut," replied Mrs. Burns. "An' he mightn't be here till late. But whin me man Tim comes—that's his stip in the stair, the laggard! Tim, d'ye know this gintleman?"

"I do!" answered Tim. "I remimber makin' him stop stickin' single-tax stamps on me caboose."

Morgan laughed with the manner of one delighting himself with memories.

"An' then I heard yeh arguin' down in Missouri Street on the land question. Oh, yes, Mr. Yeager and I are pretty old friends. I hope ye're well, and I'm glad to see yeh lookin' so prosperous," answered Tim. "Set up an' have a bite with us, won't yeh, Mr. Yeager? Mr. Courtright'll soon—why, you're his fri'nd, ain't yeh? I forgot it, till this minute!"

Tim walked over and solemnly shook hands with Morgan as the inadequacy of his former salutation occurred to him in the light of this new valuation of his visitor.

"An', sir," he added, "I want to say right here, that you're the friend iv a man!"

"Where is he?" exclaimed Morgan, as if the inquiry had burst from him after long repression. "Where is he! No, thank you, I can't stop. I've had my dinner. Tell me where I can see Mr. Courtright!"

"Yeh cuddn't find him in a year," said Tim.

"I've been hunting for him longer than that!" cried Morgan. "But surely, you can tell me—"

"I'll go with yeh," said Tim. "I know where most of his hang-outs is."

"Then," said Morgan, "we must wait until after you have had your dinner."

"No," said Burns, "we can find him in an hour or

so, 'r we'll know we can't find him at all; an' I can wait that long, like a flirt."

Morgan's heart misgave him as he looked at the teamster chilled with his day on the dray, pulling at the icicles on his beard, hungry with the hunger of long hours and a cold lunch.

"I'd like a cup of Mrs. Burns' tea before we go," said he, "and you can join me, can't you?"

"Sure," said Tim; "but did yeh iver try to pull a hungry dog from his bone? Mollie, set the supper on."

"I'm right glad," said Mrs. Burns, whose conversation ran on ripplingly as the meal progressed, "that ye're about to foind Mither Coortright. The poor man's in nade of fri'nds. We're no good to him—not much good, annyway—bein' rough people, but dacent, if I do say it, an' people as goes to confession, but not his kind, someway. He's failin' f'r lack o' people to talk to. The judge, bad luck to him, tuk away from 'im the chanst to see his little gyurl, an' he's broodin' over thot. He wint wan time a while ago, to a place where they had her, an' he sneaked in to her—the man that hates a sneak as the devil—savin' y'r prisince—hates the holy sacrament, an' there he seen the fair lady a-puttin' the child to sleep—though how she kim there, I can't see, if she's a fri'nd o' his'n."

"I know," answered Morgan. "I was with her. She was engaged to sing, just as you, Tim, would be hired to do a job; and she didn't know it was the same family, at all, until all the arrangements were made."

"Indade, an' it may be," answered Mrs. Burns.

"Well, he kind o' pined and moped, an' wud set an' listen to me tell how I wint an' seen the fair lady that night—only I didn't tell 'im ahl I seen—an' then he'd tock to Tim about the time they was out on the line the time o' the washout, an' how she used to sing. But he wudn't consint to go an' see her in the the-ayter."

"An' when he wasn't talkin' about her an' her mother—"

"An' not much about her mother it was, ayther!" interrupted Mrs. Burns.

"—he was tellin' about how you an' he wint to school together; 'r was it you wint to school to him? An' how you carried the little gyurl t'rough the snow; an' how you rooned him with your rayform doctrines—on'y he don't put it that way—"

"I guess I did, though," said Morgan.

"He don't think so," said Mrs. Burns. "But he says he'd al'ays 've been a thraitor to the thrue religion—God save us ahl—if it hadn't ben f'r ye. But Father Madden says he's a heretic himself, though how can that be, an' him as he is, it ain't f'r the likes iv me to ask Father Madden to explain. Sometimes I almost think—God f'rgive me—that prastes make mistakes the same as min! An' if the good father cud've seen Misther Coortright this day week, whin he kim home fr'm that hell he works in, savin' y'r prisence, he'd've said it was pinnance enough f'r anny human soul!"

"How was that?" asked Morgan hastily.

"He kem straight home," replied Mrs. Burns, "an' niver wint out f'r supper. I knowed there was some-thin' amiss whin he opened the dure, he was so white

and wild-lookin'. He was mutterin' somethin' to himself, an' the sight iv his eyes spread over the blue like a cloud over the sky. He was sayin' somethin' about blood an' murther, an' whin I axed him what was the matther, he broke out groanin', 'To be seen like that! To be seen like that!', an' he wint into his room an' laid down on the bed. I heerd him tockin' in his schlap about a well 'r a fountain filled wid blood, an' thin that the congregation'd rade responsively the Twinty-third Psalm, an' thin, listen t' *The New Kingdom*. Av coorse these things didn't mane annythin', on'y that the poor mon was out o' health, an' runnin' over things he'd seen an' heard. This marnin' he said he had thim spells of ramblin' in his schlap sometimes, but he niver had wan here befure. Ye'll do him good. An' f'r the love o' hivin, make him lave that job!"

"You know what he's doin'?" asked Tim.

"Yes, yes!" answered Morgan. "And now, please let us go to him."

Down the stairs and up the steps to the street they went, and Burns paused as if to catch the scent. Morgan was surprised at first to see his guide turn into saloons oftener than anywhere else; and then recalled to mind the fact that he who wishes to meet men who have no homes and can not belong to clubs, must go to the saloons to find them.

"They're Hunkies an' Jews an' dagoes, hereabouts," explained Burns, "with wance in a while an Irishman keepin' a bar f'r political headquarters. He'll likely be at an Irish joint, because they's more discussion there. The Germans run their saloons for beer an' singin', an' good clean free lunch, an' a good time.



We'll run in here at Hull House an' see if he's here. He used to hang around here a good bit; but he quit, somehow, only to git meals at the restaurant."

At the restaurant the cashier, who knew Court-right, said he had not been there that day. Down Halsted Street they went, across to Blue Island Avenue, back and forth until they were tired.

"We'll inquire here at Conway's," said Burns, pausing before a saloon past the door of which he had gone several times before entering. "I'm not very well liked here, but I guess we'll risk it."

The room was fairly well filled with population of the West Side. The bartenders, who were busy setting forth great foaming steins of beer to a group of swarthy Hungarians, were apparently Irishmen. A negro porter was busying himself with the cuspidors and the state of the floor, with very little apparent effect. A couple of men of indeterminate lineage but well-fixed station in life were sipping Scotch high-balls at a table, their flashy scarf-pins and clamorous clothes needing no corroboration from their inscrutable faces and well-shaven beards to proclaim them as members of some protected branch of the grafting profession, and thus freed from the necessity of concealing their breed. Some Italians were eating spaghetti at the disorderly lunch-counter, elbowed by a big mulatto with a neck covered with scars. Burns stepped to the desk, between the bar and the window, and asked a question of the man who presided over the cash register machine.

"Hello!" said he, in apparent surprise. "This you, Tim? The Strangler? He's back behind that screen. Walk back—it's on the square, Tim."

Burns looked at the saloon-keeper a moment, seemed convinced, and walked back to the screen which made semi-privacy in certain stalls divided down their middle by narrow tables, and furnished with fixed seats. Courtright sat facing them as they looked in. He was talking with a big man whose swarthy face was pale with a yellowish pallor. His huge shoulders and ponderous hands seemed out of keeping with his sunken chest and hollow cheeks, drained dry of blood—a great powerful ruin of a man. He was smoking a cigar, and another was lying in front of him on the table. Emerson, pale and wide-eyed, was neither smoking nor drinking, but was seemingly engrossed with his talk with his companion. He saw Burns, who walked ahead of Morgan, first.

"Come in, Tim," said he. "Don't move, Jack. It's Burns. I want you men to meet on a peace footing, and get as close together in heart as you have been with your fists. And—Morgan Yeager! Then you knew me! How did you find me, old man? You don't know—"

"It's taken me a week," Morgan replied. "The address they gave me at the packing-house was wrong. I have been a good deal worried about it. To stay away so long, after letting you get away from me that night in the automobile—"

"Was that you?" cried Emerson. "I wondered who it was. I might have known!"

They had stood in this exchange of greetings, with nothing in their manner to show that there was in this meeting anything more than in any chance encounter of old acquaintances. Tim Burns, ignorant of Emerson's weary hours by Enright's bedside, as he lay

in doubtful struggle with the prostration from the hemorrhage, and unable to understand the new friendship between Black Jack and the man who had broken him in body and spirit, was standing all the time, amazedly holding Enright's left hand in his right, and stammering. Enright was clumsily saying that he knew he oughtn't to have slugged Burns in the jaw; but he, Burns, knew how it was, and he was trying to find out from Emerson some way of being a little more on—on the square, up to a certain point, anyhow. No wonder Tim Burns was smitten dumb and motionless. Courtright slipped from where he stood, in rising from his seat, and pushed Tim in opposite Enright, whom he addressed as Jack, and was answered with a similar familiarity. Morgan, ignorant of the past relations of the men, could not account for Burns' astonished appearance; but it passed from his mind, as Emerson took him by the arm and went with him into the next stall, where they sat down for the first time in years, face to face. The trite commonplaces of speech came to their lips, as they so often do when language is inadequate for the speech of real scope of meaning.

"You've been sick," said Morgan.

"Not really," answered Emerson. "I've had another of my queer spells—when I was in an occupation that allowed nerves, the doctors used to call it breakdown under nervous stress. I don't quite know how to account for it; I'm as strong as a bull. You've been well? I'm glad to see that you have prospered."

Morgan's prosperity, such as it was, was the last thing about which he wanted to think. His mind went back with a great leap to the time when this

wide-eyed working-man with the iron frame and mobile mouth and nostril looked wonderingly upon the boy who could not take off his coat for very decency's sake. He remembered the other time when they had met after long parting, and this man wearing the crumpled cap and clothed in the cheap dun-colored cotton coat over a faded, frayed and collarless shirt, had asked him into the luxurious study in that old First Church of Lattimore, where the bust of Shakespeare and the picture of Drummond looked across the *Compendium of Theology* at each other, and the tramp had told to the preacher those fiery truths which had brought their fervid recipient to this—this back room in a dirty saloon, companioned by a thug in the service of the Kali of industrial exploitation, amidst the mingled smells and sounds and moral stench of stale beer, staler profanity, predaceous greed and festering crime. His eyes grew misty, and the indignation of years brought his fist down upon the table and sped the anathema of generous hate from his lips.

"And the Aylesburys and Deweys and Bloodgoods," he cried, "are living in peace and plenty, and guiding the moral forces, as they hypocritically say, of a great town! And yet, we prate of justice!"

Emerson looked at him in surprise, and it was some seconds before Morgan's seemingly inconsequential remark grew plain to him.

"They aren't to blame," said he. "I'm glad, in so far as I can be glad of a personal advantage, that I have been saved from the spiritual starvation from which I tried to save them, and failed. Think, Morgan, of being obliged to believe that the religion of

Jesus has no more of redemption in it than theirs has! Think of being obliged to worship a God who makes a world in which people must be poor, and thus must live—as we live here! I don't see how they can be as good as they are. Mrs. Aylesbury is a better woman than I should think she could be in the pulseless spiritual drought of that life of hers and theirs. She never meant to do wrong, only a little, and that only to save what was good in her little world. John Bloodgood tried to be a good fellow, when I first knew him; but how could he be any better than he was, and succeed in the game of life as he understood it? And, in spite of the cruel wrongs he did me, I think Judge Bloodgood is a very good man, who felt that I was a wild beast who had to be trapped and put out of the way. It doesn't do any good to blame them. They would do right, if society only made it as easy to do right as to do wrong, and if their eyes weren't closed, and their hearts sealed up by the very necessity of living in such a world—like the rich who are happy and well fed in the Hindu famines. They must be thus, or they must die of the general dearth. They must die spiritually, or they must die in the flesh—or make one long life of compromise and struggle of it. I can see how it is with them—they—just—simply don't know, Morgan. And the thing is so simple, and so easy! We sit straining and straining and pulling against one another in this day of ours, in a great tug-of-war of social forces, the sweat of agony on our faces and the hatred of fear in our hearts—and it would be so easy if we could be shown how to stop the awful pull, let our muscles relax, drop the horrid rope of exploita-

tion, and stand at ease in a new fraternal state, face to face in brotherhood and peace."

Morgan sat silent, wondering what he could do to show Emerson all his heart with all its admiration and love at once; and, somehow, that which to him seemed the greatest thing in the world to cheer and bless him came into his mind, and he spoke abruptly.

"Olive wants to see you," said he. "She's been hunting for you ever since that night at Hess'. She thinks of you all the time. Emerson, as God is my judge, she loves you—just how or in what way, I don't know; but she loves no one else, that's plain. You must let me take you up to see her."

Emerson flushed, and made two or three gulping efforts to reply. When one of the habitués of the place, with a pink-clad woman by his side, pulled the curtain aside and peeped in, he saw the two men sitting quietly across from each other, and went on. To Emerson, it seemed as if the utterance of her name in that place was a profanation.

"Did she—" he stammered. "That day up there—when she fainted—and you saw me. Did she know?"

"No," answered Morgan; "she didn't know."

"You knew? Yes, I remember. You hunted me up."

Emerson sat for a long time, as it seemed to Morgan, in silence; although, as before, several times he made as if to speak. At last he rose and went out of the door, paying no attention to his companions, and Morgan followed. He could not understand his friend's behavior, and time after time the thought came to him that this was madness. He walked rapidly south on Halsted Street, down toward the

Ghetto, eastward through the wilderness of the West Side, and all the time Morgan kept step with him. Ferret-like eyes peered out from chink and cranny and around corners, as the beasts of the wilderness sniffed on their trail wondering if this were quarry which it would be well to drag down; but the quick firm stride and unshrinking advance of the tall man and the short one gave them immunity from harm. Across the Taylor Street bridge they walked, and then Morgan felt that he had the key to this sudden rushing out into the night—Emerson, in his workman's coat and crumpled cap, was going to Olive. Who shall say whether or not he was right? We only know that he went on to the lake front, and that then only the tall man paused and faced his companion. When he spoke, it was calmly, and with no trace of the struggle through which he had just passed.

"Did you tell her it was I, Morgan?" asked he.

"No," said Morgan, after a pause. "I did not."

The tall man walked on, and the short man, as before, fell into step beside him. They passed by a theater.

"She's here," said Morgan. "Let us wait until she comes out."

"She fainted at the blood and horror of it," said Emerson, "but mostly at me. Did she speak of it?"

"After what she saw," answered Morgan hesitantly, "she was ill. She couldn't talk of it, at first, and now—"

"I know, I know," said Emerson.

"It wasn't the slaughtering," Morgan went on, "so much as—"

"I know," answered Emerson, "—as it was the

thought that men could be found who could do such things.”

“Not quite that,” Morgan said, “though it was that in a way. But you see, the resemblance, as she thought it—she’ll be coming out in a moment. That’s her carriage.”

“I know,” answered Emerson, “her eyes knew me—I knew it then—but her mind refused to credit anything so horrible. . . . Good night, old man, good night. Don’t let us lose each other any more. Come and see me, Morgan; but don’t tell Olive that you’ve found me. It will be better to remain lost to her; don’t you see it will? Good-by!”



## CHAPTER XXX

### THE EMBASSY OF THE BURNSES

Miss Dearwester's understudy, Elsa Lorayne, whose name was really Alma Schneider, of the brewing family of that name of Springfield, being a pious young woman, fervently thanked her heaven for the opportunity which now came to her by the unprecedented indisposition of the star. It had always seemed to her that no woman could in good faith be as uniformly full of health as Miss Dearwester; and that her unfailing readiness to take her rôle must be traceable to some maliciousness of spirit, some fear that she, Elsa Lorayne, would supplant her in the esteem of the public and the regard of Mr. Brayton. So when asked to be ready to sing the part of the Queen, she thanked God with no more of inconsistency than that which marks the chanting of *Te Deum* when our fleets send to their oozy home the armada of our foes—and looked as much like Olive as she could in the glory of the moving spot following her over the stage—while Brayton fumed in the flies, and worked the papers for as laudatory notices for Miss Lorayne as he could get; and little Odette Cassler, whose place as Titania was secure on account of her physique and her skill in the aërial business, snubbed Elsa with faint praise, and offered front of rebellion to Brayton, who was afraid of her somehow, and therefore pitied Smith,

Odette's husband, who did something in the scenery so as to be with the show.

And meanwhile, Olive's condition was such as to frighten her mother, who plainly informed Mr. Yeager that a boy of twelve years old ought to have had more sense than to have taken a girl like Olive to such a place.

Saying no word as to his own ignorance of what was to be seen at the abattoir, or of Olive's insistence upon accompanying him, Morgan humbly admitted this. Whereupon Mrs. Dearwester softened.

"I presume," said she, "that she made you take her. Maybe you're not so much to blame, after all. But she's afraid to be alone in the dark, and wakes screaming half a dozen times a night, like a hysterical child, and cries at nothing, and don't eat; and the doctors say that she's had a shock that she won't get over for no knowing how long. She's too sensitive, Morgan, for things like that; we mustn't forget that. And her work has been trying."

It wasn't so much the sight itself, Olive explained to him, when they allowed him to see her, as the thought, taken in connection with the sight, that men have to do such things. For days she had been haunted by the apparition of the man with the knife. If she tried to go to sleep in the dark, he stood before her eyes no matter which way she turned them, all red from head to foot, and shining with a sort of phosphorescent light, and she just couldn't endure it.

She was wearing a little nosegay which Morgan had sent her, and the room was filled with the odor of a profusion of flowers of the most rare and costly sorts, merely the choicest of the bushels and bushels

with which she was deluged. The hospitals and prisons of the city were enriched by the roses and lilies and violets sent her by admirers whom she did not know. But poor Morgan who was so conscience-stricken—she would wear his, she said.

“And the worst of it is,” said she, “that the face of that horrible creature—think what he must be, to do *that!*—keeps taking the form and expression of dear ones of the past, those who would die rather than do a cruel thing. Think of the horror of seeing one you loved, even in a dream, in such a place, in such a condition!”

“Yes,” answered Morgan, “I can see.”

“You know,” added Olive timidly, and as if by an afterthought, “how tender of everybody and everything poor papa was?”

Morgan failed to reply. He remembered Mr. Dearwester only as an ordinary farmer, with singularly dark and expressive eyes; but rather stern and strict than tender. And he knew that Olive’s reference to him was a subterfuge, a little necessary woman’s fib.

“Ollie, dear,” said her mother, “you mustn’t talk too much, you know.”

She took the old lady’s hand, now soft and white as it had once been hard and blackened, and pressed it to her cheek.

“It isn’t talking, mommie,” said she, “to soliloquize with Morgan. He doesn’t say anything, and I just ramble on. It relieves me. There’s less strain than when I try to keep interested in my own thoughts.”

“I don’t know,” said Mrs. Dearwester, “as I’d take

it as a compliment to be told I made it quieter than perfect solitude."

"I like it," said Morgan. "It's a man's ideal of companionship. When I reach the point where I feel it necessary to talk to you in order to be company, I'll stay away."

"Make the most of the next day or so," replied Olive. "I'm going back to work then. Mr. Brayton's dumb anxiety, and his hourly inquiries after my health, are getting on my nerves; and poor Elsa Lorayne—the papers really treat her shabbily."

The smile which lingered on Olive's lips showed that she was not entirely above the human weakness which will not allow us to mourn the failures of those who try to do our work. Morgan, however, was too much engrossed in the smile itself to trace it to its moral origin. What a privilege this of his to lounge in her boudoir, to see her in the negligée of spirit and attire which marked her lassitude and depression! The shimmering dress, so loose and easy that it made her form more entrancing by half concealing it, the golden slipper peeping from the fleecy bottom of the robe, the arched instep with its marvelous ankle smooth and flexile in the silken hose, the tapering forearm with its priceless bracelet—what man in Morgan's place would have failed to be carried off into blissful realms of fancy, along untrodden paths of fairy elusiveness, to the uninhabited and—alas—uninhabitable Castle in Spain, by the dear and deep suggestiveness of the occasion? No one—and besides, Morgan had duplicities of his own to consider.

He had not at this time found Emerson Courtright;

but he knew where he was to be found. He would not go back to that place where he worked; the look as their eyes had met forbade that; but his address could be had; and for the *Observer* force to run him down was easy. He had not hurried in the matter of coming face to face with Emerson. He wanted to think over his duties in the premises before that. So far as he himself was concerned, a hog-sticker in a packing-house was as good as any other man. Olive, however, and her strong desire to meet Court-right and help him and serve him—that was another matter. How could they ever be friends, with that apparition so oozily red and so ghoulishly phosphorescent, back there in the girl's mind. How could a man choose such a vocation who was not in some sort debased to its level? And how long could a man follow it, in any case, without sinking to it? To find Emerson fallen from his high estate would be a greater tragedy than never to find him at all; and Morgan knew how strong is the grip of the lower levels on the soul that has no help in its environment. Anyhow, would either of them wish a meeting, knowing all the facts?

Such had been the course of Morgan's thought until he found his friend, and discovered the motive which had condemned him to the living death of his horrible vocation.

"I had to do it," said Emerson, in one of their talks. "There must be something wrong in an occupation which so tends to embrate a man, though my reason sees nothing more of evil in the killing of a thousand animals an hour in one place, for a nation's food, than in the slaughtering of one a month for a

family; only it is so infinitely more horrible! But if the society in which I live calls upon some man to do nothing but slaughter all day long—and maybe it's that very specializing in killing which makes it wrong—why, who am I to refuse the burden of sin, if sin it be, and stand aside for another to take the pollution? Maybe I can do it with less of stain than one could whose soul would make no struggle to hold itself above that justification of one's work which even thieves, and faithless officers and prostitutes, have. So I went in and did the work."

"How can you endure it?" asked Morgan.

"I would rather be knouted," answered Emerson, "than go to work in the morning; and at night, I sometimes find myself trembling with the loosening of the strain. And I think this doesn't come from any moral superiority of mine over the average man, but just because of a different nervous organization. The man who preceded me in my job was as good a man as I—perhaps better. But he never felt this disgust and repulsion I feel, but was proud of his work. Can you see how that could be? No? Well, if there is anything wrong in this, it must be in the embruting influence of it. But this man lost his place because he was not basically brutalized: he objected to the scalding of the hogs before they were dead. He said it was cruel, and made a fight for his ideal like the hero he was, standing on the killing-floor covered with blood. Think of the tender heart he'd have had under other circumstances. I didn't know about it when I went in. I took the place because the men to whom I tried to preach the law of brotherhood refused to hear me. I was alien to them; there is so

much of class-consciousness abroad. I had to excel them in strength, in the things by which they live and amuse themselves. I had to throw their strongest wrestlers, and lift their heaviest weights, and do their worst tasks. Then they began listening to me."

"Then, if there is nothing so bad in your being a hog-sticker, why not—"

"No!" cried Emerson. "No! That's a different thing. She could never, never look at me as she used to do. That isn't a matter of reason, of contemplation, but of feeling, Morgan. I should always be a horror to any woman who knew. Oh, no! A thing may not be wrong, Morgan, but it may set off one from certain companionships, like leprosy. Why, old fellow, it even makes a little difference between you and me!"

Morgan, in his usual way, sat and thought this out before answering. Especially he considered the red apparition on a girl's sensitive retina. Then he answered as to himself:

"It isn't true," he said. "It's so far from being true, that I don't take it kindly of you to say that."

At the same time, even after receiving Emerson's apologies, Morgan was not quite sure that Court-right's instincts were not right even as to himself. He was quite sure that they were so as to Olive. He urged Emerson to take up another way of life. He even found him a place, on trial, on the *Observer* staff. But Courtright would not even consider it.

"No," said he, "I tried to live for the masses while outside of them, and failed. I see my work, now. I am finding myself. For the first time, I have real followers."

So it was that the days rolled on, and Morgan con-

tinued to live what he thought of as his double life. He and Olive went out and searched the streets by night no more, and the quest was abandoned. Indeed, she seemed to note some constraint in Morgan's treatment of her, and less and less she made him her errand-boy and escort. John Bloodgood, they learned, was abroad traveling for his health—it being whispered (and truthfully, too) that it was a case of alcoholism, and insomnia growing out of the use of narcotics. The feeling of hope which had filled Morgan's sky with light, was gone, now, and he relapsed into his old saturnine prosecution of the day's work. His new book was engrossing his time, he told Olive—and it was quite true. She scolded the book, which robbed her of her pleasant and restful "soliloquies" with Morgan, but she allowed him to slip away. She was even becoming more and more gracious to Brayton, who had generously thrown away the chance to produce *Higgledy-Piggledy*, and was preparing to put on with wonderful stagecraft Salvator Wigmore's *The Cenci*, with Olive in the rôle of Beatrice—you all remember what a sensation it made, her Beatrice and Fidelio's Count Cenci; and how the critics declared it too terrible and gloomy for public representation; but, nevertheless, how it made that great place for her, in grand opera, the final conquest of her genius.

Well, it was just at the time when *The Queen of Atlantis* was in its last week, that the quiet of the star's life received its first shock, since that memorable one which left her haunted by the dread visions in the dark. Morgan was away on some lecture tour, and Brayton was in New York.



"I feel quite deserted," said Olive to her mother.

"I should think you would," answered Mrs. Dearwester; "there wasn't over a cart-load of orchids and a bushel of love-letters sent in this morning."

Odette Cassler laughed slyly.

"I'll send Mr. Smith over to take you out for an airing," said she, "if you think— I won't, either! He's half spoony over you now!"

"Pshaw!" said Olive.

"Of course," went on Odette, "your supper last evening at Auriccio's with the Grants, the Smythe-Smiths, and the Italian count; your Wheaton expedition next Sunday, and half a dozen other things—especially the count, don't look quite like desertion, even if he does turn out to be a Monte Carlo waiter, as rumor has it."

"Rumor!" cried Olive. "Monte Carlo 'waiter, indeed! I tell you, Odette, you're jealous. He has offered to furnish an abstract to his title of nobility at any time, and simply implored me to allow him to place the matter in the hands of my solicitors; and grew furious when I told him it added interest to the affair to have this element of mystery as to his origin. The trouble with the foreign counts and princes is they lack sense of humor."

Odette, after the delivery of this expert opinion, tripped away in the informal way of one who lives in the same building and runs in often, and Olive's maid stole softly into the room and laid the afternoon papers on the table.

"Anything in them, mommie?" asked Olive.

"Well," said her mother, "here's a whole page of pictures of the scenes in *The Cenci*, as it will be staged

by Mr. Brayton. Here's an account of a train running off the track in California; and here's something about a riot down in the packing district. I guess there's nothing of much interest."

"Let me see it," said Olive.

It was the story of the packing-house troubles, not the theatrical column, to which she turned. It seemed from the account that the strike had been on for some days, and that the riot grew out of an attempt to introduce strike-breakers into the houses. There was a picture of "Strangler Kortright," the hog-sticker at the Perry, Burrell and Gage house, who had done much to organize the union, and of Rabinowski, the strike leader. She gazed at the blur of ink with something of the same fascination with which she had looked at the man himself, as he stood in crimson repulsiveness before her. It must be the identical man. And look! That same horrible resemblance, in the poise of the head, in the curls about the brow, and—even in the name.

"Ma!" said she, "look here!"

"What is it, Ollie?" replied her mother.

"Here!" answered Olive. "Do you see the resemblance? And look at the name! It's perfectly horrible. He's the creature I saw that time—the man with the knife!"

"Why," whispered her mother, "why, it's—no, of course it can't be. Do you see what a criminal character this man is? They've got him in jail. It seems that he picketed the place, whatever that is, and they've sent him to jail for it. And from there he's gone to the prison hospital to have an operation performed on his head where some one struck him with

a brick. How could a man that looked like that do such a thing!"

Again and again Olive scanned the newspaper, and once she sent her maid to telephone to Mr. Yeager's rooms to see if he had returned from his tour. It was her custom now to let Miss Lorayne sing one night each week, and this was Dearwester's night off; so she composed herself to a quiet evening with her books.

"Zare are two peopl' to see Mad'moiselle," announced the maid.

"I told you, Amelie," said Olive, "that I can't see any one. Who are they?"

"Zay seem of ze lowaire class," said Amelie. "Ze vooman is shocking dress', and ze man is of ze peasantry. Here is a note zay send. Faugh!"

"Mrs. and Mr. Burns want to see Miss Dearwester," ran the note. "(Signed) Tim Burns, Conductor of Extra No. 3. The con you give the flowers to."

Olive perused the note in growing wonder—wonder which finally gave way to curiosity mingled with some inkling of the truth. She stood expectantly awaiting them, and advanced cordially as the maid showed them in.

"Is it you, Mr. Burns?" queried she, clasping Tim's hard hand. "And you, my old and true friend, that I never saw but once! I've wondered if I should ever see you again!"

Mrs. Burns on her part had been wondering about several things: whether they would be admitted at all to see the great lady; how Tim would comport himself in such surroundings; and what she herself ought to do to uphold the dignity of the O'Malleys.

And now, just as she was preparing herself for her stateliest greeting, she found a pair of soft arms thrown about her, and realized that this silken, fragrant, queenly, dazzling woman was kissing her as she might have kissed a long-lost sister.

"May God bless ye!" she cried, in tearful acknowledgment of a boon for which any of us, brethren, might have felt grateful, all the while patting Olive on the back with her broad hand, "and give ye long life, an' putt y'r inimies undher y'r feet, where anny man undher hivins might be proud to be: an' how's y'r health this long time?"

"Oh, I'm well," answered Olive, placing Mrs. Burns in a seat beside her own, and holding her hand in unaffected warmth of greeting. "I'm always well. I wonder if you've been in Chicago all these months, and never let me know it! I have wanted all the time since I left that town, to see you again and thank you for your goodness in coming to me as you did and warning me—when you had everything to lose and nothing to gain by it except the mere helping of a girl who had no other help. It was so noble of you!"

Mrs. Burns pressed Olive's hand caressingly, and patted her arm. Neither of Olive's visitors seemed able to fare forth with Irish freedom on the highroad of conversation—showing that it was some particular way which they sought, and not wandering for its own sake. Olive sat in quiet and sympathetic amusement, while Mrs. Burns heliographed messages of command and supplication to Tim across the room. Mr. Burns coughed and cleared his throat. Olive made an actress' note of the mechanics of the expression of embarrassment.

"These strikes," remarked Mr. Burns, "are gettin' to be something fierce."

"They are, indeed," said Olive. "You take a good deal of interest in the subject?"

"Yes," answered Tim. "I'm on the grievance committee of the Teamsters' Union. You'd call it a practical int'rest, wouldn't yeh, ma'am?"

"I'd call it a fool's int'ruse," said Mrs. Burns, "not to quor'l in ye're prisence, ma'am; to putt up ye're job wid the jobs iv Tom, Dick an' Harr-ry, to be shuck dice fer be Shippers' Associations an' Unions, heads they win, tails you lose—"

"Ye're displayin' ye're ign'rance iv both the labor question an' chuck-luck, Mollie," said Tim. "But we was speakin' of this packin'-house strike, ma'am."

"Yes," gasped Olive, as if some presentiment was even now in process of verification, and entirely oblivious of the fact that this was the first mention of it; "yes! I was thinking of that! Do you know—"

"In Chicago," went on Mr. Burns, "we farmers 're always glad to hear of our old acquaintances. You may be glad to know—er—that is, ma'am—"

Mrs. Burns threw a despairing glance at the ceiling, and relieved her inefficient understudy.

"Dearie," she said, leaning toward Olive, "I wuddn't say that yeh remimber him at all at all; but we thought that we bein' inthrested in the troubles iv an old fri'nd, the holiest man that iver stuck a—that iver stuck to the poor to his own roon—an' he a fri'nd of yours; though we know that a single woman can't allus do as a man wud; but we bein' with no manes to putt up bail, an' not knowin' where else to go to git him out iv quod; an' he allus holdin' ye up as an

angel of light—that though he’s sunk so low, so low, an’ ye’ve rose so high, an’ rightly too— My God, lady, if yeh cud see him lyin’ there wid his head broke, in disgrace an’ helpless, ye’d hilp us to hilp him, ye wud, ma’am, ye wud, an’ tell ahl the worl’ to go to hell!”

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THROUGH THE PARADISE GATE

To a man suffering from concussion of the brain, it makes very little difference whether it results from a blow from a policeman's club, or from a brick thrown by one of a mob of Huns and Poles in an endeavor to drive the police away. Neither will it make much difference, from a purely pathological standpoint, if it should turn out to have arisen from the impact of a coupling-pin hurled from the hand of a negro strike-breaker, who wants work, and having succumbed to the artifices of an employment agent at Memphis, comes to Chicago and goes fear-mad, in true negro fashion, when he discovers that he is engaged in war instead of peace: and uses coupling-pins and links and stones forcefully, but without discrimination. Neither will such a patient be much benefited, physically, by a favorable decision of the controversy which rages in the hostile camps, as to whether he was a furious rioter urging on his fellows to violent outrage, or a disciple of peace struck down in the chance-medley of our beautiful organization of industry, in an endeavor to still the storm of incipient battle. Traumatic cerebral inflammation will run its course in any case.

Not many people so suffering, however, will lose themselves in thunderous rumblings in the ears and explosive throbs of headache on the strait bed of a

prison hospital, and wake to consciousness in a spacious, quiet room, the walls of which are scenes from the old-world life of the days of hunting and hawking, lighted by the golden sun of a summer afternoon filtering in through the partly closed slats of Venetian blinds, and thrown into a winking, shimmering pattern of clear amber coming and going on the wall, as the foliage of trees outside is gently moved back and forth by a summer breeze.

Such, however, was the experience of Emerson Courtright. The very quiet was enough to waken one whose nights had for so long a time been spent over near the corner of Harrison and Halsted streets; it was so broad and unconfined and full of peace. For it was not the quiet of silence, but that of little contented sounds in grass and hedge, of the tapping of woodpeckers on far-off rampikes, of the chattering scream of the halcyon heard over broad waters, of the murmurous voices of leaf and ripple, of the rustle of voiceless bird and squirrel under the window, of a muted full chorus of innumerable living, courting, mating beings calling out their loves to all the world, so gently stealing on the ear as never to be noted except by the attention of fixed inquiry—the chorus of summer. So awakening, Emerson was aware of the fact that he should have been startled; but it all seemed so natural, so congruous, so the thing his spirit craved, and, moreover, he was so impressed with the sense of having come into this place by good and beneficent activities, that he lay quite as free from agitation or exigent inquiry as one awakening from this life's fitful fever in the meadows of moly and amaranth. He lay looking at the cavalcade of lords



and ladies with their hounds and foresters riding in the debonair joy of the olden time down the glades and through the dells of the tapestry paper, feeling somehow that it was not necessary to concern himself with the fate of fox or boar or heron—or of forester in his relation to lord. His world had suddenly come into focus as a picture. It is the way most of us like to see our worlds. We resent it as a cruel impertinence, when some one tells us that the lords and ladies and foxes and hounds and harts and herons and foresters and even the rude peasants in their ruined fields, gazing after the unthinking rout of the hunt, are all living beings, some of them even human beings. We welcome the concussion of the brain which brings oblivion; that which clears things up, we hate and deplore.

As for Emerson, he neither hated, nor deplored, nor thought. He felt, somehow, that it would be better not to move his head very much. This impression was connected with that of a close, firm band about his brow, and the vague memory of pain. Besides, why look aside, when the graceful hunt moves courteously as a minuet down the wall, in the checkered spot-light of the golden sunlight wimpling behind the moving foliage? I am glad to set it down, that like a half-awakened babe, Emerson Courtright grew drowsy, and all unconcerned for hunter or hunted, dropped asleep again to the lulling of the muted chorus from the greenery outside. It has been so long since he did such a thing, and the prospect for his having the priceless privilege of burdenless slumber and care-free awakening in the future seems all so dubious!

When he awoke again the blinking checkered sunlight was gone, and he heard the calls of chimney-swifts and night-hawks outside, and saw the lacy curtains at the broad low window swept inward by a breeze which smelled of blue waters. Somewhere far off he heard the pop-pop-pop-pop of a motor-boat, increasing in rapidity to a stutter, and dying away to a mere atmospheric quiver behind some far headland. It was the first jarring note in the harmony, and he moved, his sensitive nerves protesting, because it was not the call of a gondolier, or some boat-hail sent forth as the white sail climbed the taper mast and filled rounding like a grebe's breast. As he moved, a soft hand crept to his and fingers fell deftly upon his wrist to take the reading of his pulse. In the dim light of the waning west he could see little, but the protest of his nerves gave way to grateful relaxation at the vision of a woman's form, a straight and stately form all white in translucent robes like an angel's, and bending over him graceful as a young tree. The neck was bare and darker than the dress, the face oval and the mouth a dab of shade that he knew must mean red ripeness in the light. About the head was a great shadowy nimbus of ebon hair, and looking down into his were two unfathomable eyes—the eyes that made all men dream dreams of sweetest foolishness.

Emerson's fingers closed upon those which studied his pulse, and he breathed deeply and contentedly. The hand submitted graciously to his capture of it, and she brought her face closer to his, as if his act had awakened inquiry as to the course of his disease, like some new symptom—a thing to be considered and recorded.

"Olive," said he, "Olive! I'm—I'm glad you're here!"

"Ah! Ah!" she whispered. "You know me, Emerson! You know me!"

His lips wreathed themselves into the strange smile of illness, when the droop of weakness and the shadows of failing nature first gave way to the dawning pleasure of well-being; a strange smile, half sorrowful, as if the poor racked features were feeling their way once more toward mirth along ways lost to use and memory; a smile full of pathos to any sight, but most so to one who has stood by the bedside and listened to the ominous utterances of delirium, and fought the fight that drives back for a while the skirmish-line of death.

"Know you?" he replied, with this heart-breaking smile, the first his lips had formed. "Know you! I knew— Stay with me a little while, can't you— Olive?"

"Yes," said she. "I can stay with you as long—as long as you want me, Emerson—" and one listening might have felt the tenderer word which followed and fitted the speech, but which remained unspoken.

So it was that she drew her chair to his bedside, and was sitting with his hand in hers, as her mother came gently in when the afterglow in the west had receded far down toward the treetops. She had thought to go and tell the good news of his better state; but the weakened clasp of the hand on hers held so closely that she must have disturbed his rest had she gone. His white face and bandaged head had faded in the growing darkness, and only the snowy counterpane and Olive's lacy dress lightened

up the soft darkness of the room. For a while, after she knew that he was sleeping again, she lay with her cheek on his hand, her black hair silhouetted on the bed, her other hand and arm thrown over the marred and broken form in the attitude of one who possesses and defends. But when her mother came into the room, she was merely sitting at the bedside, her hand still clasped in his.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### "AMONG THE GUESTS STAR-SCATTERED"

Mr. Morgan Yeager got off the train at a Wisconsin town. He saw many spires and a rounded dome beyond the trees, and as a skilled economist, knew instinctively the approximate number of banks, the size of the two department stores, the area of the business district, and the value of property in the heart of the city and among the homes. The agreeable and uneconomic thing he was looking for, however, was Olive, at whose invitation he had come up from Chicago, and her mother and a conveyance. Not much news awaited him, he suspected. He knew that Emerson Courtright was at the bungalow, recovering from his hurt, and this recovery was likely to be complete. Mrs. Dearwester had written him about this, and the Burnses had told him how Olive had filled Tim's hands with money so that he might get a lawyer and deposit the cash required to take the place of property when Tim signed Emerson's bond and got his discharge from prison.

"They tuk him," said Mrs. Burns, "in a special ca'ar, wid a nurse and a docther, an' the fair lady, God bless her, an' her mother, whose bark ain't annything like as agrayable as her bite—if bite it cud be called. An' they wint up t' th' place wrote on the ca'ard Tim give yeh. An' wan docther said it wud kill him, an' another said it wud be better

than anny place in Chicago, an' th' ol' lady decided the thing in a sicond, an' said she guessed she'd take chances, an' away they wint, an' lift Tim wid a lot iv cash that he can't use at ahl."

He had had a difference with the managing editor of the *Observer*, and some high words, relating to the manner in which the packing-house strike had been handled. It was an outrage, the way in which "Strangler Kortright" had been exploited before the public as the leader of the rioting—a damnable outrage.

"Well," said the managing editor, "there was rioting, and this man was in the midst of it. The reportorial force put the blame where it seemed to belong, being obliged, in the nature of the case, to put it somewhere."

"Damn the reportorial force!" said Morgan. "They found in Mr. Courtright a picturesque figure who would help to make a good story! That's all; and you know it."

Whereupon the managing editor remarked that he seemed to be devilishly interested in "Mr. Courtright," as he was pleased to call the Strangler, and if he knew anything which would add to the information which the *Observer* had been able to give with its reference to this hog-sticking gentleman, why doubtless Jones would be glad to have it; but as for him, he was too busy to discuss ancient history. While Morgan was in a boiling temper over this—a period of unamiability which lasted for several days—the letter came from Mrs. Dearwester, saying that they had a few friends coming up to the bungalow, and they wanted him there with them, and would he

come a day or so before the rest, so as to have his visit out with Emerson? They would meet him at the train—in fulfilment of which promise, here was Mrs. Dearwester in a victoria from the bungalow stables, at the far end of the platform.

"Get in, Morgan," said she, giving him her hand. "Ollie couldn't come."

"How far is it?" asked Morgan, in that way we have of asking about the thing of no interest, but conveniently at our conversational hand.

"Five miles or so, isn't it, Johnson?" asked she, appealing to the coachman.

"Right around five miles, ma'am," replied Johnson. "Of course, sir, it's a good bit less than two miles by launch across the lake, but I believe there's something the matter with the spark-plug, sir."

They rolled along the macadamized road which skirted the lake, discussing the weather and the boulevard, the great "cottages" which glimpsed through the trees, where this and that master of wealth had built his summer home—mostly Chicago people, as Mrs. Dearwester said.

"Who's coming up?" asked Morgan.

"The Smiths—Odette Cassler and her husband, you know," answered Mrs. Dearwester. "And Joyce Gray, of the Athenians. We shan't have any but friends that Olive thinks are intimate ones—if there is such a thing nowadays."

"What are Emerson's plans?" asked Morgan. "How well along toward recovery is he? I wonder if he will—"

His voice broke off in the confrontation of something he dreaded to say—the expression of the idea

of the possibility of Emerson's return to some such place as that where Olive and he had found him.

"That's what I wanted to see you about," answered Mrs. Dearwester. "You and I seem to be the only ones left with any idea of looking ahead. Poor Emerson is too weak—or has been till lately—to be able to begin the wrestle; and Ollie has been opposed to letting him think at all. I guess she's right from a doctor's way of looking at things. But you can see, Morgan, that things can't go on in this way always. Was there any pryin' around in Chicago to find out where Emerson went when he was taken from the hospital?"

"Yes," answered Morgan. "Mrs. Burns told the reporters that the money came from the Federation of Labor, for his bail, and that he was being nursed by Sisters of Charity on the North Side—which she insists is true."

"She's a good soul!" fervently replied Mrs. Dearwester. "It wouldn't do, would it, to have all the facts known—after all the lies the Sisters of Malice of the First Church told?"

"No," assented Morgan, "not—not under the existing circumstances."

"Well, by the time your visit is over," said Mrs. Dearwester, "things will clear up. I get so balled up tryin' to figure it out that I feel like flying, sometimes. There's nobody that we all—Olive, Emerson and I—feel so sure of, as we do of you. I thought I'd have as many people here with us as I could. Don't you think that was right?"

"Quite right," answered Morgan. "I shouldn't have thought of it, though."



"And another thing," said she in some embarrassment. "Here's a little purse; and won't you see to it that Emerson has some—some clothes—what he needs, you know, to appear as—as he ought, while the people are here? Olive—that is, we thought of it; but I'm dead sure he never would. We couldn't very well speak of it, you know!"

Morgan laughed, and returned the money.

"I just remember now," said he, "that I owe him an overcoat; and at interest, that would amount to fully as much as it would take to fit him out."

"Then," said she, slipping the purse into his side pocket, "please lend him this. You can do it—you can do it, and he won't feel degraded by it, Morgan. Ollie—that is—we have talked about it a good deal. And, say, Morgan, if it can be arranged so we can go to Europe pretty soon, as we ought to have gone long ago—and leave Emerson in some place where it won't be a nightmare to think of it, you'll fix it up, won't you, Morgan—that's a good boy!"

The broad verandas of the bungalow were cool and shady, and the summer breeze, sifted clean of heat by awning and jalousie, crept beneficently through them. He and Mrs. Dearwester alighted at the gate, and walked up the drive so as to enable Morgan to see the flowers and the marquees and other features of the grounds. They came upon the veranda from the side, and found Olive and Emerson in quiet converse, he covered with a light rug, and lying in an extended Morris-chair, she on a low stool or hassock, looking up into his face, with her finger between the pages of a book which they seemed to be discussing. Morgan felt a curious shock as he noted something

new in her face—something intenser, like the things she simulated in the climaxes of her acting. She rose and came to Morgan, clasping his hand in both hers, and greeting him with a tremor in her voice, as if some intimate confidence trembled on the edge of utterance—and then she led him to Emerson, as to an audience with the sovereign.

"You mustn't rise," said she, with a restraining hand on Emerson's shoulder. "Morgan knows you're glad to see him; and your walk this morning has wearied you."

"I'm as well," said Emerson in answer to Morgan's man-like and matter-of-fact inquiries, "as I ever was. Or will be when these dear friends will allow me to go out and get strength by exercise."

"Oh, now, Emerson!" remonstrated Mrs. Dearwester. "We'll let you go as far's it's safe; but you know how your head began paining you when you got a little heated up yesterday. We can't tell just how much the wheels were shook up inside of your head; but they don't seem to get straightened around as fast as things do on the outside, you know!"

"Did they hit you pretty hard?" inquired Morgan, with his grim mixture of severity and sympathy.

"Things just went dark before my eyes," answered Emerson, "and I never got any real opportunity to see what they did. But I guess they did."

"Look," said Olive, lifting the waving brown locks so as to show a livid scar.

Morgan looked, with indignation—and then his attention wandered to the jeweled fingers twined in the brown locks, the lingering touches with which they readjusted the hair, and the eloquent exchange of

glances which sent a little flush to Emerson's high forehead.

"I can't find it in my heart to blame the man who did it," said he, "even if it was a policeman. It's been such a privilege to be nursed back to life as I have been—one of those returns of the golden age which sometimes come into life. It's all gain for me, Morgan; for I had closed that account for ever."

"Pshaw!" said Mrs. Dearwester. "We're going to make a running account of it."

"And what the banks call an active one," said Morgan.

"And as a part of to-day's entries," said Olive, "right after the items of Emerson's lesson in the interpretation of *The Cenci* and Morgan's arrival—both illuminated and rubricated—we're going to put in the fact that Little Ollie poured tea. Lo, it is here even now. Put the taboret down right here, please. Emerson is to be at my right hand, so I can help him, and keep him from spilling the tea. What do you think of my place, Morgan? One could almost live here, not?"

Morgan, as usual, in the case of small-talk, reserved his decision. He was watching and collecting facts, and putting two and two together. Mrs. Dearwester was plainly anxious to bring the present Saturnian era to a close, and to go away to Europe, where matters musical, and important preëngagements called her great daughter. And, yet, she seemed as affectionate toward Emerson, in her way, as she had ever been. His future, his present needs, the care of his health—as to all these, she could not have been more solicitous had she been his mother. And this new

intensity of radiant and beneficent tenderness in Olive—what was it? Morgan could not tell. It made her more intensely delicious to look upon, more perfectly charming to meet, if possible, than before; but somehow, it set her afar off from him. And as for Emerson, he appeared in no such state of bliss as must arise from a consciousness of the favor of Olive—that real favor which Morgan set before himself as the *summum bonum* of life.

"What's the hook-up of social factors here?" asked Smith, the husband of Odette Cassler, when he arrived. "I don't quite get hold of the combination."

"I don't know," replied Morgan, who was playing with Smith a game of billiards, and made a shocking miscue as he spoke. "I don't get hold of it either. Hard luck, that kiss! You ought to have had them all together."

The last remark, I need scarcely explain, referred to billiards, not to social factors.

Morgan and Emerson reverted to their youth, in the two days which elapsed before the full number of the house party was made up by the arrival of the Smiths and Miss Joyce Gray, an English contralto, who was taller than Morgan, and said "Oh dyuh!" in a full-throated way that delighted Mr. Smith so exceedingly that he studied ways to surprise her into the utterance of it. After her arrival, some fatality seemed to throw her and Morgan together; but prior to that time, he and Emerson tramped over Olive's fields and through her woods, and sat on stiles and rail fences and communed. They talked of the boys and girls of the old prairie school; of Morgan's short experience in politics; of Emerson's

choice of a career, and the conflict between churchianity and Christianity, which was assumed as beyond controversy, just as ordinary people assume the conflict between heat and cold; of the disappointment which must sooner or later have come to Emerson's father in the discovery of that mistake of his in thinking that servitude was abolished with slavery; of the wonderful awakening of the social conscience which could be seen in society, looking toward a new and peaceful revolution which would at last solve the sphinx's riddle of history, and cut the Gordian knot of the ages—the riddle and knot of justice as to work and the reward of work. And then Olive, in her white piqué or muslins, would stroll across a field or come rustling through a thicket to take charge of Emerson—which she would do with so charming an air of ownership that Morgan wondered how Emerson could be so calm about it, and go on gravely telling her of the discussion he and Morgan had had. Mrs. Dearwester, meanwhile, looked on, in some mysterious anxiety. Morgan was sometimes tempted to say to her that he failed to see the cause of this—that if Olive and Emerson were coming to love each other, there would seem to be no reason why they should not be happy. Once he half hinted this. Mrs. Dearwester looked at him a full minute before replying.

“Morgan,” she said at last, beginning to cry, “sometimes you're the darnedest fool I ever saw!”

Morgan thought over this for a moment, and looked so puzzled that Mrs. Dearwester laughed at him through her tears; and then they laughed together, and changed the subject, leaving him more perplexed

than ever. It was this, among other things, that made him say to Smith that the combination was too complicated for his solution.

Emerson was, at first, a mystery to Odette Smith and Joyce Gray. Smith shied from him because Odette and Joyce soon came to something like an agreement in what he termed a policy of "boosting Olive's mash." They quite fell into the old attitude toward him of the days when the fair of Lattimore spoke of the brow "crowned by godlike pathos." He said that he had never seen a man yet who had wavy hair and baby-blue eyes, who wasn't a sissy. However, after Emerson had sneaked away to the links with him and played a few rounds of golf in quite passable form, and had unmercifully drubbed him at tennis, Smith admitted that Courtright was quite a decent duck, and that if he hadn't been handicapped by his decency, he'd have been the heavyweight champion of the world, with a line of saloons from the Battery to Bronx Park.

"He's a painter's model for the ideal poet," said Odette.

"Rats!" retorted Smith. "He's a sculptor's model for the ideal slugger. A poet, with a biceps like his!"

And yet Smith enjoyed, as well as the rest of them, the pictures Courtright drew for them of the life he had seen among the people who had been to most of them but moving figures in the landscape. This man in the natty summer clothes seemed always to think of them as starving, joying, suffering, and especially loving, men and women. He told of the miners and their trials; of his being often driven to such places as dance-halls and saloons for warmth and welcome;

and especially in one western city, for the reason that he dared not tell the secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association that he had no money, because he hoped to be given a chance to lecture for him on *The Religion of the Labor Problem*, and knew that a man without means would at once lose caste—and the chance to take up the collection he so much needed. "Because," said he, "we do not live in an age which will respect the teachings of those who need alms, nor sit at the feet of one who has not where to lay his head." Of the bartender who gave him half-a-dollar "fer grub and something to cheer him up" (although he fondly believed that no one would suspect his poverty), saying, "I've been there myself, old man!" of the courtesan who asked him, in the dance-hall, if he had no place to sleep, and, as he said, in sheer sympathy for his misery, offered him her room; of the outcasts and waifs with whom he had walked and camped and talked; and always, of the rising hope that things are in some way to be better, like the faith in a Messiah. As they listened, Morgan watched Olive, and noted how her breath came quick and her eyes glistened as she heard him.

"But I say, Mr. Courtright," said Smith one night, "things aren't as bad as you seem to think, you know. I don't know of any one out of a job, that wants one; and you must admit, that we're in the midst of an era of the greatest prosperity."

Miss Gray gasped, the sacrilege of controverting what Emerson said was so apparent.

"Oh dyuh!" said she, "you surely cawn't know as much about it as Mr. Courtright, Mr. Smith, now can you?"

"What Smith says is true, in a way," replied Emerson. "It is an era of great prosperity—for the prosperous. But it is so precarious that everybody is looking and looking for a panic, and when it comes, it will be worse, in all probability, than anything we have ever had, because there are so many more workers whose lack of wages for a week will throw them into the street. It is like the good times on the raft at sea, just after a shower has soaked the blankets, and some one even caught a fish. I can scarcely bear to look forward to the end of these 'good times'—the crash will be dreadful. And yet, our social system is such that good times can not be permanent. We have now fever, and now depression—never health. And even now, in the best of times, the poverty of the slums and the stress of life of the workers is not less than in hard times, and the relief organizations are pressed to their capacity. Only in hard times there are many who have no means of living at all. The air is full of fear always."

"I only notice that," said Smith, "when things go bad at the evening performance."

"Be still," said Odette, "or you'll notice it now."

"We must have a society where men may live unfearing lives," said Emerson, smiling, but continuing. "We must open the earth to hands ready to work, so that no one will fear for his job. Even now, men are crazed for fear of losing their jobs, and all their thoughts center about some one hiring them; while if the great earth were freed, they could employ themselves. And then the false prosperity which ends in booms will never come, and its shadow—the panic—will be known no more. Fear of want is the curse of



man. It makes him cruel. Who can give ear to the needy, and escape the danger of need? It makes him greedy, because the getting of wealth becomes at last an end instead of a means. It makes him heartless and lustful; for he dares not love and marry. Oh, it leads to everything there is of wrong!"

"I see," said Smith.

"I'm going to break up the sitting," said Olive. "Mr. Courtright isn't to sit up late, and he isn't to talk of things which interest him too much."

Morgan and Smith walked down to the lake and sat on the wharf while Smith finished his cigar.

"By George," said he, after puffing away in silence for a while, "he takes it more coolly than I should! Doesn't he, now?"

"I don't know what you mean," said Morgan—"er—that is, do you think so?"

"Why, confound it!" said Smith. "If he wasn't sick, and wasn't bigger than I am, I'd like to kick him till he woke up! Good Lord! Olive Dearwester, running about in that way after a man, and he apparently as oblivious of the situation as if it were her mother. Grateful? Sure! But his heart ought to be breaking; and he ought to be going up in the air in spasms of yearful gush. Why, I know places where he would be lynched for less. And do you notice how all the women sort of adore him?"

To the subject of this criticism, this summer of long days was like a vision of the night, a tranced passage into another state, a dawn of beauty and fellowship and understanding and sweet suggestion after the murk of cold darkness. He took the things which came to him as a child receives the fealty of people

who serve him, unquestioningly, and without much effusiveness of gratitude. To him, Olive was not the great diva, the queen of song and beauty before whom Smith and Odette and Joyce Gray bowed in a sort of homage—she was just Olive, the little girl whose voice and smile had been so interesting to him as she sat with red-stockinged legs thrust out from beneath her desk; whose passion had been so touching as she defended Morgan from punishment, and when she bade her teacher good-by, as they thought, for ever; who had been the strong helper in that far-away time when they had wrought miracles in the cause of the church; who had been so sweetly loyal to him when all others, almost, had fallen away; whose image had always been in his mind when he had thought of or described ideal womanhood, affluent in beauty, strong in latent passion, magnetic with the attractions of a soul too warm for prudery, too simply good for any but the right path. Emerson, be it remembered, knew nothing of the *allegro* movement in her life's sonata, of Zozo and Zizi the spaniels, the motor-cars and the jewels and costumes, the fame of which had traveled over the seven seas and their shores. He knew that she was exceedingly good to be with, that this bungalow life was golden with mysterious splendor, and that the happiness came back to him when he awoke that day, and was permitted to hold her hand in his as he lay in delicious weakness until sleep merged its visions with those of waking. So far as love and possession were concerned, he gave the ideas such relations with her as one attaches to them when thinking of a goddess or peri, as too rapturous for mortal desire, as far off as the enjoyment of nectar and

ambrosia. Perhaps the one resentment left in his soul was that against the man whom he sometimes visualized to himself as winning Olive, and assuming toward her the familiarity of the average husband—the ungrateful! And yet Mr. Smith wanted to kick Emerson, in a friendly way, because he took her devotedness so calmly. So little do we know our fellows!

At the very first opportunity, Emerson, while he was yet confined to his bed, tried to tell Olive and her mother about his loss of little Mildred, and of his feeling that he should have the right to see and know his child.

“I haven’t gone to sleep once since that night,” said he, “without shutting out all other things from my mind, and looking at you bending over Mildred’s bed and singing to her. Wherever I am I can close my eyes and see you—you can’t believe how plainly! I suppose people have told you how beautiful you are, Olive, haven’t they?”

“It’s my trade, you know,” answered Olive, flushing gloriously. “Some have mentioned it, but it never impressed me in the way—in that way.”

“But you are,” insisted Emerson, with the childishness of physical prostration, “and I wouldn’t part with that picture—not for anything. I wish I had some way of getting the court to let me see her. I should like to see her once a year; it doesn’t seem that that’s too often. It wouldn’t be fair to take her from Amy on her birthday, but if I could have the day before or the day after it, so that I could see how she grows. Did you notice how her hair is darkening up next her head? And how strong and chubby

she is? Don't you think she'll look a little like me? And in one day a year, she would come to know that I am as good as I can be with my—my ideas of things; and not at all the man the people around her say. I would put my whole being into that one day's influence, so that she would feel it until the next year. I could do it—I believe I could do it. And then she might come to be not quite a stranger to me. Do you suppose such a thing could be done?"

"It can be, I'm sure!" cried Olive. "I'll help you to do it! As sure as I live, I will. It was all because you were friendless: and you won't be friendless—never again!"

And then her mother came in and reproached her for letting Emerson talk and become excited, and they put cold compresses on his head and made him cease trying to talk. It was then that Olive, who had sent home the Chicago nurse, and taken charge of the case, adopted the policy of forbidding all subjects like his bereavement of his child, and his work among the laborers and slums.

"We'll make this a holiday," said she to him, in giving her orders. "Let's eat the lotus for a while, Emerson, and forget."

So they entered into the island valley of Avilion, where this Arthur, so deeply smitten through the helm, was to be healed of his grievous wound and brought back to his great strength.

"By three queens, as of old, when the others come," said Olive. "Only we are of the sort with tinsel crowns—Odette, Joyce and I."

"'But she that rose the tallest of them all, and fairest,'" quoted Emerson, "'laid his head upon her lap,

and called him by his name.' There is only one queen for me."

He lifted her hand and kissed it, and pressed it in his. They had been reading, and when she came to the passage where the king is shown as rising slowly, as with pain, reclining on his arm, "and looking wistfully with wide blue eyes as in a picture," Olive's voice trembled, and she looked at him and ceased reading for a while. Recommencing, she went on to the lines:

"And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust,  
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mixt with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings."

Then she choked up again, and passed the book to him, who, apprehending, read on, to "And the new sun, bringing the new year."

"A new year to this Arthur!" said she, as he held both her hands in bidding her good night. The next day Morgan came, and found her with the vibrant intensity quivering in her voice, the dreamy luminosity in her eyes.

So they wandered through this nineteenth-century Avilion, in the old, old way. Tragedy and the dark and horrible places of the spirit they avoided as by agreement. Once he asked her if she knew that it

was he who wielded the knife on the killing-floor, and she put her hand over his mouth, half in earnest and half in play.

"I didn't know then," she said, "and often I've wished that I never had known. I'm trying to forget it, only as shadowed forth in the words we read the other day, 'And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops of onset.' "

"You understand, Olive," said he. "The best thing about you and the rarest is, that you understand. I like to hear you call my red stains 'drops of onset'—the stain of battle for the cleansing of the realm from the beasts and pagans as noxious as those against whom Arthur fought when he overcame the heathen hordes, and made a realm and reigned! You always did understand, my dear!"

Mrs. Dearwester looked sharply at Emerson, as he said this but he was looking off at nothing. Olive fastened her eyes upon the daisy she had brought from the roadside, pulling off the florets one by one as if appealing to the old charm for answer to the ever-absorbing question. All these approaches to the brink of things took place indifferently whether Olive's mother were present or absent; though the prima donna was not a person to or for whom the thought of chaperonage would seem appropriate, any more than for Semiramis or Sappho or Hera. I suppose no two persons ever were more free than they from the surveillance which conventionalism might be thought to require—or thought less of the matter. The thing which drew Mrs. Dearwester's interest in this case, even more than Emerson's "my dear," was the inquiry as to whether Olive was really,

or only apparently, saying "He loves me: he loves me not," as she pulled the florets from the daisy. Anyhow, she dropped them one by one from her dainty fingers, until only one was left, at which she looked smilingly for a moment, and then put it to her lips, and stuck the brown center with its one ray of white into the bosom of her frock.

It was rather a trying time for Morgan, who was engaged daily in conference with Mrs. Dearwester looking toward some place in the economy of this money-mad age for Emerson.

"He could stay here," said Mrs. Dearwester, "as long as he liked. We need some one we can trust, to look after the place. But—"

"I agree with you," he answered to the negation in the "But—," thinking of Emerson's playing the rôle of Malvolio in the court of their Olivia. "It wouldn't do. I'd rather see him back in—almost anywhere where he could have his hands in the kneading-trough of human life."

However, they agreed that Morgan could find something of a more gentlemanly sort than the job he had lost, as soon as people returned to Chicago—if he would take it; and, in the meantime, they would do what they could to make his projected series of meetings in the Teamsters' Hall a success. And all the time, Mrs. Dearwester kept urging upon Olive the necessity of keeping their European engagement with Mr. Brayton and Salvator Wigmore.

"I can't go yet," Olive always answered. "Let me alone, ma, while I'm doing a little good, and am happy."

In good sooth she seemed strangely happy, and

wherever she went, broke out into little trills and cadenzas of song like a thrush. The young women would exchange glances as they heard these involuntary outbursts of "fine, careless rapture," as two ring-doves might look at each other on hearing the mating call from across the hedge. Joyce was so far infected by the thrills that went in mesmeric suggestion through the atmosphere of the bungalow, that Morgan, who walked and rode and sailed with her, in what ought, in all good usage, to have been something more than a summer flirtation, was a little embarrassed at times to know how to meet the sentimental outbursts of the fine young Englishwoman whose voice and face and figure were good enough for the Athenians, and made Morgan the envy of most of the men who saw him with her. To him, however, one note of those little birdlike carols from the throat of that dark queen of his dreams would make him deaf to poor Joyce's deeper register for a day.

Poor Joyce! She was feverish and unhappy, one night, and sat mooning at her window, which faced the wing from which looked the casements of Olive's rooms. It did not much surprise her to see a man's figure come softly and stand in the shrubbery as if the person were looking up to the place where lay the greater songstress: it seemed so natural; and she would have felt it quite fitting if to mandolin or guitar he had begun to sing his love. Instead, however, he came close to the wall, and turning his face up to the window as if in supplication, disclosed the unmistakable hair and cameo-like face of the strange Mr. Courtright. She, in her artist's soul, knew the



reading of all riddles of balconies, and casements, and wanderers in gardens, and her heart throbbed in sympathy with love and lover. Then she noted another dark figure—a shorter and heavier one—approaching the same shrine; she saw the second comer stop at sight of the other, and after looking steadily at him for a few moments, retire into the darkness by the way he came. So much the moon showed Joyce Gray that night of general wakefulness—and she wondered why the shorter man walked so disturbedly beneath ladies' windows; and said to herself, with a little quickening of the pulse, that her room also opened upon that same charmed angle. Yet Morgan, next day, instead of following her as she went for a lonely ramble in the wood, went away with Emerson Courtright, and began talking about his return to Chicago.

Chicago! It was a name of dread and command and call to Emerson, breaking with fierce dissonance upon the glamorous air of the realm of Arthur, Guinevere, Count Gismond, Childe Roland, Lorna Doone, Annabel Lee, Sir Launfal, The Lady of Shalott, The Italian in England—and the Queen of Atlantis. Morgan saw him start, draw in his breath sharply, square his shoulders, and say, "Yes! Chicago! That's so, Morgan; we must go!"

"I don't mean to take—to take you away," answered Morgan. "I think it would be better, far better, for you to stay, as long as you can—until you are quite well again. There is time enough to go after you have got quite strong again—here."

"I'm well," answered Emerson. "Quite well, as you can see. Besides, Mrs. Dearwester said this

morning that she and Olive must go abroad soon, very soon."

"Has Olive said anything about it?"

"No."

"She won't go until she wants to," said Morgan. "Brayton and the composer can wait."

"Yes," replied Emerson, "but it must come sometime, you know. And the sooner it's over, the sooner to the work again."

They were striding along the boulevard that ran around the lake, stopping from time to time for the skirmish-firing of this conversation. They had passed the limits of Olive's grounds, and reached the place where a beautiful little church had recently been built, and stood in the garish freshness of new stones and mortar and stained glass, its spire treading on the margin of the street, its windowed rear looking out upon the blue lake. Emerson halted before it, as if to divert the conversation from their going away, as we do when we bring to an end some trying discussion, and began reading the inscription on the polished corner-stone. "The Church of the Ineffable Love," he read.

"If it were really that," said he, "how I'd like to stay here, among the trees and birds, and preach! The thought of the pavements, the jargon of tongues, the filth and dullness of the poor souls of the slums—it hurts. If only there were some place to preach freely the faith which would feed the body, and then purify the soul—The Church of the Ineffable Love!"

"Somewhere," replied Morgan, "there must be such a one for you. This might be it, Emerson. Maybe—"


There was a tapping of footsteps on the cement walk at the side, and a tall, stooped figure came into view and approached them. It was a man somewhat advanced in years, the hair, once black and heavy, but now thinned and iron gray, falling down over the collar of the clerical coat. The stiff collar and white scarf, as well as the air of sanctity in the droop of the mouth and the lines of the eyes, coming from the constant utterance of prayer and sermon, bespoke the minister of the gospel. He looked at Emerson, started, took a step toward him, halted, as if to correct an error, and turned to Morgan, at whom he gazed for a moment, and then looked again at Emerson, as if the second impression of familiarity gave renewed validity to the first.

"It is I, Doctor Jones," said Emerson calmly, "and this is Mr. Yeager. "It is a long time since we met."

Doctor Jones came forward and cordially shook their hands, apparently sincerely glad to meet them. He was still much as of old, and as Emerson listened to his scholarly phrases and just inflections, he remembered that time when, sent by John Bloodgood, the doctor had come to plead with him not to open what must be a warfare in the First Church by preaching that sermon on the Economics of Jesus. They stood for a few moments before the church, and then they turned back towards Olive's bungalow, the three of them together.

"Are you the pastor of the church here?" asked Emerson.

"No, no!" replied Doctor Jones. "I am still at the head of Tudor College. It has been a heavy work, Mr. Courtright. The up-building of a seat of learning



has come to be more and more a fierce competition with others of the same sort for endowments."

"I have so understood," said Morgan.

"Yes, it is true," went on Doctor Jones. "After we got the Halliday donation, which was—was—was pending when—when you were our pastor, Brother Courtright—"

"Yes," said Emerson as the doctor paused. "Yes, Doctor?"

"After we got that, we thought we were established. But we had just begun. Mr. Saylor, of the Universal Plow Company, gave us the next big lift, and we have had others. Just now, to be frank with you, I am acting as vacation substitute for the regular pastor of the Church of the Ineffable Love, so as to enable me to preach to Mr. Halliday, and to bring to his heart the claims of Tudor College for two or three millions more. He built the church for his own place of worship, and attends it during the summer when he lives over in the great cottage you see through the trees."

They went on, Morgan thinking that the doctor had been pretty successful in bonding the economic policy of his college for an endowment, and Emerson wondering how all these years of suppression of the seen truth had worked on this man's soul. At last they came to the entrance to Olive's grounds, and halted, in act of parting.

"I want to see you again," said Doctor Jones, wringing Emerson's hand. "I must see you!"

"I am stopping here," said Emerson. "I shall soon go to Chicago. I ought to be there now. What can we say to each other?"

"You followed your convictions," said Doctor Jones, "and taught the truth—that you and I both know to be the truth. I was bound by a great work, and, while you washed the Master's feet, and fared forth into the deserts with Him, I had to follow Him afar off."

"Are you sure," asked Emerson, "that you followed Him at all?"

"No," cried Doctor Jones, "I am not! I am not sure! I sometimes feel that I insult Him every time I step into His pulpit! As I said that day when I went to you, I am perplexed. In God's name, Court-right, what can we who are bound to plutocracy's wheel and know that the church is equally bound—what can we do?"

"Nothing, perhaps—while you still supplicate the Hallidays for a share of their stealings," answered Emerson. "But if all who are in the ministry, and who see how the church is commercialized, were to cry out and spare not, for freedom, for an emancipated earth and the law of equal opportunity, in the name of Jesus, who never thought that men calling themselves Christians would keep landless brethren from fields and lots they themselves could not use, while professing the creed of the Sermon on the Mount—such a thrill would run through the whole people as would bring on a bloodless revolution. One alone goes up against the Goliath of greed as I did, and is slain, as I was slain; and the rest, believing as he believes, say to him, 'God bless you! Don't do it!' as you said to me. If they would all act together—I can see the church leading the way to the redemption of civilization from bondage to that death which

comes from the laws which throw everything worth having into the hands of the fewer and fewer, and give to the many only that less and less upon which they can learn to exist. And yet you, George Jones, who used to be a man, stand like a beggar here by the side of this road, until, perhaps, the great robber Halliday may pass by and toss down alms to your school! What can you teach that is worth teaching—in such a school? Your teachers must dodge and shrink and prowl their way through dried formularies of standardized teachings, glad if they can smuggle in a word here and there of the truth with which the air outside of schools and churches is palpitating—the truth that will come to its own, in spite of the false creeds and cowardly evasions, and theological narcotics of all the priestcraft and schoolcraft in all the world!"

Morgan stood a little aloof from the two, watching Mrs. Dearwester as she came down across the lawn to meet him—to know what had been the result of their conversation with reference to returning to Chicago. He saw Doctor Jones walking agitatedly back and forth, and heard Emerson's voice ring out as it used to do in the philippics against greed which drove him from the church.

"What can I do?" said the doctor. "I say all I can—all it is safe to say. Nobody thinks the religion of the Sermon on the Mount practicable—nobody but such extremists as you; and what can one do?"

"He that would save his life must lose it," answered Emerson. "If you would draw all men after you, you must be lifted up on whatever cross the cause has for you. If evil be entrenched behind a stone

wall, you must become a projectile, to be dashed to pieces against it. You can not serve both God and Mammon. Mammon, not God, brings you here, and guides you in this great work. You can not live as Jesus did? Well, then, die as He died. I speak to you as a dead man, whose death, many times repeated, has done so little good, that it seems pitiful; but if I have not battered a breach in the wall, I have at least laid no stones in it. When the conquering hosts of Jesus come to take over the government, and place it on His shoulder, they will find in Tudor College one of the stones of the wall of Mammon."

"No, no!" exclaimed the doctor. "You can't believe that of me, Courtright!"

"I believe it of the Hallidays who have bought you and such as you with a price—and, yet, forgive me! I judge neither you nor Halliday or any man. This complex burden of institutional sin comes on us with the milk we draw from our mothers' breasts! God will surely forgive us all for the things we can not cure. I am no better than you; only happier in having given up the useless struggle to serve the two masters. Good-by, Doctor, good-by!"

The doctor gripped his hand and went on down the boulevard, and Emerson stood watching him, until he turned for a last look, and waved reply to Emerson's beckoned farewell. Courtright turned to Morgan with high resolve burning in his eye.

"I'm myself again, Morgan!" said he. "I have awakened from a dream. To-morrow you and I go back, where there are things to do!"

Mrs. Dearwester heard, and turned as if the words had resolved the doubts in her mind. She walked

rapidly back to the house, entered it, and moved from room to room as if in search of some one. At last she found her daughter alone, and appareled for the open air.

"Have you seen Emerson?" said she. "I can't find him anywhere."

"He has just come home," answered Mrs. Dearwester. "I think, Ollie, we had better begin looking up the sailings. Our patient is about to leave and the others are tired of the place. I heard him say to Morgan that they would go back to-morrow."

Olive stepped to the window.

"It won't do any harm to look up the sailings," said she, in so steady a tone that her mother breathed easier of the anxiety which had for so long oppressed her. "I am going out for a walk with Emerson, mommie. We'll be back for dinner—and if we aren't, don't wait."

Up into her sleeping-room she went, and looked into her mirror for a last reassuring glance at herself. There was no need for Amelie's services; the whole harmonious ensemble of color and form and charm was in perfect order. She looked herself in the eye, and spoke commandingly.

"You coward!" said she. "You weakling! You to cringe before convention. You are to stop cringing, to-day, and fight. You are to go out with him and find out, first of all, if he loves you as you think he does. And if he does—ah, God, if he does not!—you are to save him from himself, and from that living death-in-hell to which he condemns himself—or you are to look your last on happiness to-day!"



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE MAGNET AND THE ARMATURE

"I shall write down," said Olive, "a whole page of demerits. I've been looking everywhere for you."

Emerson turned at this challenge, in forgetfulness of such things as separation, and Halsted Street, and problems in general.

"Let me make up," said he. "What's the program?"

"This is our day, as you should have remembered," said she severely, "for doing various things; among them is the survey of the site of the dam for the trout pond; then we're to decide what shall be done with the rocky ledge over on the other side of the hill. After that the distribution of the crops, and the pastoral and arable is to be looked into. We have our work cut out for us. Are you ready?"

"Quite so," said Emerson.

"Don't exert yourself in the sun too much," cautioned Mrs. Dearwester. "The wheels 'might get jarred loose again."

"Never mind, mommie," replied Olive, "I shall be with him, and I feel an interest in the machinery staying just as it is."

So away they went together, Olive and Emerson, while the little court of the queen exchanged smiles and relapsed into the stagnation of hammock and book. Miss Gray placed Morgan by her side and

made him talk to her of the West, of his work, and of the things she ought to read to brace up her frail structure of unrelated knowledge. At last Mrs. Dearwester came for him, and they went into secret session. Much was to be done in the way of adjustment of relations. The central figure of their confabulations was Emerson Courtright. He mustn't be allowed to go back. The meetings in Teamsters' Hall offered a way out, if they could be made sufficiently successful to seem a demand upon his efforts. Money would be forthcoming in the way of making them a success.

"There's plenty of it," said Mrs. Dearwester, "the land knows; and for one, I'd rather have it thrown out to be fought for on Halsted Street, than to be poured out for so many maids and dogs and jewelry and smelly cars that ain't half as dependable as old Jack and Nig used to be out on the prairie. You always knew you'd be somewhere else in an hour or so with them!"

"I don't know," said Morgan. "I don't know. If money could have brought the people to meetings, the churches would have them all—if they want them. If it is whispered around that Strangler Courtright has come back with a roll, and is being backed to hold meetings, men like Petersen and Jack Enright will begin to inquire where the money is coming from, and what corporation is backing the deal. I'm not sure but Emerson's way is the only way—for him."

There was not much packing to be done, and Morgan looked after it all—for himself and Emerson. They would go that evening and be in Chicago the next morning. All the while Morgan, in an unde-

finer sort of way, was wondering what was going on out there among the trees and meadows.

Could the world have been permitted to hear the remarks to the lady in the looking-glass, it would, no doubt, have been shocked. Mrs. Aylesbury would have said to Mrs. Dewey at the meeting of the Ethical Culture Club, that she always knew that girl was a shameless hussy, and now this traipsing off in such an obvious way proved it. And then they would have begun the study of the beautiful story of Emma and Eginhard—which goes back, it will be remembered, to the time of Charlemagne. However, the mistake is in the telling of the story, which, perhaps, should be thus:

Now Queen Olivia, being young and full of the sap of youth, and moreover, being of such wondrous beauty that no man of all her court dared look forthrightly into her countenance, lest he run straightway mad of love, was without a consort, for that none of her nobles and princes was pleasing in her sight. Yet she, being young, as aforesaid, yearned strongly after the king that was to be, and dreamed many dreams of him, as being of mighty strength and of most fair favor, and so pure in heart that to none other woman would he ever give even so much as a glance of the eyes or a thought. So, being of such warm heart toward Love, she was nonetheless cold to all lovers until there came to the court, borne prone and white upon branches of cedar spread on two lances, a knight cravenly smitten from behind upon the crown by caitiffs in a gruesome battle in the wilderness, and bleeding much and nigh unto death. To him went forth the love of Queen Olivia in a great

yearning, for she saw in him the king that was to be, as shown to her in the visions. She had him ministered unto with much tenderness, and she with her own royal hands did deign to nurse him back to health; and all said that the queen had here found her consort. But this knight, being modest and humble of spirit, and, moreover, having taken upon himself to fight the beasts and heathen until death, closed his eyes to the beauty of the queen, though sometimes his looks spoke forth the love in his heart, and he told his beads continually that he might not see the queen before his eyes: for she was wondrous fair of face, and of a figure rounded like the ringdove's breast, and of a grace like a young poplar. And her eyes were like the eyes of Taurus in the sky of summer. So by much counting of the beads and thought of his poverty, and contemplation upon the queen's greatness, and the wild beasts and heathen, and the quest, mayhap, of San Graal, the knight withheld his tongue from speech of love, and his arms from the embraces whereto they ached, until he was quite healed, and was ready to go on his way. It was then that the queen, thinking that the knight was holden of his modesty of estate and nature, did fare forth with him one day into the forest a-hawking. For there is something in forest walks and shady garths that to the heart of youth doth away with all differences in estate, and maketh the monarch of a sort with the forester; and, thought Queen Olivia, in the democracy of the wood, who knoweth but my king may speak to me?

It sounds much more in harmony with the proprieties, in truth. Nevertheless, let us go on with

the adventures of this modern prince and princess in speech more suited to modern ears.

She tripped along before Emerson through the path, stooping so that her straw hat might escape the boughs, and gathering her skirts about the ankles clad in open-work of silk. Emerson followed, telling his beads. That is, he was arranging his words for the statement he meant to make with reference to his return to Chicago. At the margin of the meadow, she turned on him, her cheeks rosy with the swift walk under the trees, her bosom heaving with her deep breathing—heaving in rounded billows glimpsing creamily through a lace yoke, topped with its half-seen line of pink ribbon. The knight forgot the count of his beads, and began all over again.

“Now here,” said she, “is where we thought we might put the dam. Let us sit down and make the preliminary survey.”

There was a plat of blue grass at the very edge of the declivity, and they sat down, Olive curling her feet up under her like a kitten. Emerson threw himself down at full length, his athlete’s form lying in the easy pose of strength.

“I’ve something to say to you, Olive—”

“If it’s anything disagreeable,” said she, “please put it off till night. Let the lotus still rule to-day, for my sake. Won’t you, Emerson?”

“Yes,” said he. “It shall be as you wish.”

“Thank you,” she said. “I like you best when you are obedient. Don’t look off there at those things, by a—by a dam site! Look up at me, and let me see if you are sweetly obedient, or sulky!”

She put her fingers under his cheek on the sward,

and turned his face towards hers. He looked in her eyes long and earnestly. He was not sulking. He put his hands under hers and pressed his cheek down upon them both snuggingly. She looked away over the brook, and there was a little evanescent flush in her cheek.

"It's easier to be sweetly obedient," said he, "than to be sulky, here, by a—a good deal!" waving his hand over the "site," as if to suggest a repetition of her speech.

"I'm glad that it is," said she. Then she withdrew her hand. "Although I must admit that you've been the dearest fellow in the world since you've allowed me to be in command, I'm not going to give up my sway as easily as—as you may think I will. Where the flag once goes, there it stays, as some one says."

"Power is sweet," he remarked.

"Is it?"

"In this case I find it delicious."

"This lotus agreement," said she after a while, "doesn't forbid the consideration of serious questions, so long as they don't affect anything sordid or common or personal, does it?"

"The lotus situation," he replied, "is one upon which I have bestowed a great deal of thought. In yielding to the lotus enchantment, we align ourselves with the great world outside of Avilion. It seeks to forget. But it hasn't the charm thrown about it that we—that I have, and—"

"We," said Olive.

"I, anyhow," said he.

"We, we, we!" she insisted, "the charm that *we* have."

Emerson rose and walked back to the fringe of the wood, and returned slowly, bringing a spray of some flowering plant. He may have been looking for his rosary.

"Anyhow," said he, "it tries to forget everything. Its books and speeches and sermons must carefully avoid anything affecting the realities of life, except in those generalities which may mean one thing to you, and quite another to me. The quest of the common life is the search for the lotus; and all it finds is a sort of half-forgetfulness with uneasy rousings and grotesque dreams—like those of our public men—"

"Hush!" she commanded, putting her hand over his lips. "No prosing in the island-valley!"

"I came pretty near to it that time," said he. "And I believe I'll do it again, to be stopped in the same way."

"We were about to take up," said she, "some matters remote enough to be without the rules. I have often wondered why Arthur ever turned aside from the tourneys and the hunting of the beasts and breaking of the heathen, and the other real work of his life—to bother with Guinevere."

"He couldn't help it."

"A woman must always be a hindrance to a man engaged—in such a work," said she. "Don't you think so?"

"Yes," said he slowly, "unless she's the right woman. And women find it hard to do the things which help. Guinevere stayed at Camelot and amused herself. She did not care for the work. Maybe she had relatives among the heathen—"

"Or the beasts," said she.

"Yes, or the beasts. And so they fell away from each other."

"And Lancelot came?"

"In that case, Lancelot came. But she was untrue to him all the time. She did not help. Arthur should have been glad that—that there was no little prince or princess to make the false queen's treason worse. And, yet, she did not mean to be bad. Remember how she was tricked by fate in that looking out at the knights as Arthur's train went by, and mistook Lancelot for the king. Poor Guinevere!"

"Poor Guinevere!" echoed Olive.

She was silent for a while, pulling at the grass and heaping it in a little green haycock. She had not quite meant the Guinevere who was false; and her apologue had gone wrong. This woman Amy Bloodgood had forfeited her rights—why was she coming into their thoughts? What business had she there?

"But suppose," said she, "that after Guinevere had come another who was true; who would have gone out with him and nursed the wounded knights, and cherished him after his day upon the quest—"

"Ah!" said he, "that would have been too near Heaven for any earthly realm. 'As well suppose him mated with the tall queen who took him away in the barge after the last great battle, who healed him of his grievous wound! Sometimes I like to imagine him folded close—I like to think of that. Is thought of—of such things permitted—in Avilion?"

"Thought is free," said she, "—and amounts to mighty little. It is action that counts."

"Ah, yes!" he cried. "It is action that counts. Action!"



He sat up and looked off over the little valley. He was counting his beads again. Olive's eyes filled with tears, as she sat beside him, and realized the perversity of this man's mind. She had not meant the action which came to his mind. What business had that great unsolved puzzle of the establishment of justice to propose itself now?

They went down to the little brawling brook and prosily discussed the plans for the dam.

"I think here's the place for it," said he. "It won't take a very long dam, and what a pretty place for trout up under those alders!"

"It will be so little," said she, "and so narrow for our boat or for skating. I want it broad. I wish we were on the other side, so we would take that view of it."

"It's only an inch or two deep," said he, "on that little shelf—"

She pulled up her skirt and showed the low shoe.

"Would that do?" said she.

"It would be ruined," said Emerson.

"Can't you think of—of some way?" she persisted. "I think we ought to go over there; or how can we tell?"

"I—I might carry you," suggested he. "I have done it, you know."

"I wasn't so heavy," she answered.

"May I?" he asked anxiously.

"Will you be very, very careful not to drop and break me?" she asked tantalizingly. "Well, then, you may. First, look all about for the casual small boy or yokel trespassing on forbidden ground. Now!"

And so it was that one might have seen Emerson

lifting Olive in his arms, and Olive clasping his neck with the embrace of sweet necessity. He carried her slowly, so slowly, and all the time his arms pressed her closer, closer—

"Is it necessary to go quite so slow?" she asked at last.

His face flushed, and he walked swiftly on and set her on her feet in the lush grass far up the little green hill-slope. His hands trembled and he shook as if with an ague. He smiled up into her face now, the pathetic, mirthless little smile of fearful inquiry.

"Get up, you careless boy," said she, quite self-possessed, "and let me brush the dust off you from that puff-ball you have crushed. It's nice to be so strong."

"I don't know," said he, "whether I am strong or not, my dear."

"I do," said she. "If you hug your aspirations, and desires and things you set out to do, as tightly as you can—"

I don't know how it was, but they forgot all about the dam site, and wandered afar over that considerable portion of the grounds about which Olive knew little. She had bought the place in obedience to an impulse because she liked the bungalow. They found a little pond in which they agreed a fine crop of water lilies might be grown, and bulrushes, as Emerson suggested, for the dragon-flies to light upon.

"And cattails for pillows," added Olive. "And lotus for the table. Let's never stop eating it!"

By this time, for they sat down on many a fallen log and grassy spot, and followed many a bird to its tree, it was dusk in the hollows, and the night-

hawks were screaming in the level sunlight of the heights. They were silent as they came down to the ford, and Olive stopped and without a word put up her arms to their hold about his neck. He took her up, oh, so tenderly and deliberately, and walked straight across to the opposite side. She said nothing either as to his slowness or speed; and this time, perhaps, it was her clasp that tightened ever so slightly, as they neared to the end of their crossing. And then, when he had put her on her feet, he stooped and kissed her on the mouth in a strange way that seemed to her like a kiss from a devotee to an image. She stood quite still, and then—she put up her lips for another kiss; which he bestowed as the Greek boy might have given the second to Artemis, in the delicious fear arising from the first.

They walked on to the house, her hand through his arm, his other hand holding it, until they came to the low and narrow path, where again she gathered up her skirts and ran through, never stopping until she arrived out of breath, under her own window.

“Olive, dear,” said he, “you’ve given me the one perfect afternoon of my life. Let me thank you. I am going back, Olive, on the night train—Morgan and I. When you are surrounded by flatterers and lovers and riding high on the full tide of your triumphs, remember that I am thinking of you, that my heart—”

“Emerson!” she cried. “You are not going! You must not! If you do, I shall always be haunted by the thought of you, in that awful halo of blood and slaughter, killing your soul. I sought for you day and night. I saw you in want and cold

and misery, in a thousand dreams; but never imagined the horror of the place where I found you. You will kill me, Emerson, if you go back. You belong to me, because I found you dying and healed you. You must not go back! You must not go back!"

Emerson Courtright clasped his hands in agony, twisting them together as if he would break them.

"I must go!" he whispered. "I must! The work I have begun must be given up, if I do not go on. No one else can do it. No one else understands. I shall not kill my own soul if I go, no matter how my body is broken and wrecked. We have eaten the lotus too long, Olive. Now let me go!"

"Stay," she whispered, "stay! Stay with me!"

"Good-by," he groaned, and kissed her again with cold and trembling lips. "Good-by! I shall not see you again."

The girl stiffened, she who had all day seemed so divinely indulgent, so sweetly compliant, and pushed him away from her.

"Good-by!" she said. "Farewell!"

She left him standing there alone, the picture of disconsolate misery. She went from him without a backward look, and he stood there listening until the sound of her footstep went down the hall inside and up-stairs to the holy of holies she called her den.

Morgan and Emerson bade the other members of the house-party good-by, and went over the lake to their train. Emerson was in a tranced condition, and never knew so as to remember what was said or done; he could think of nothing but the woman—the queen of women—the one woman—ah, how could

words do her justice!—to whose appeal—too candid for the proprieties of the sordid world, but to him sacred as the evidence of a love which had for all these years burned with the pure flame of unselfishness—he had returned the insult of refusal.

They boarded the train with a crowd of summer guests, returning, like themselves, to the city. Morgan went into the smoking-room to give the porter full sway with the berth, and left Emerson sitting in his seat, his head bowed upon his hands. At last the porter came in and told him that his berth was ready for him, and asked him where the gentleman in Number Eight had gone.

“Isn’t he there?” asked Morgan, filled with a sudden foolish anxiety.

“No, sah,” said the porter. “I hain’t seen him, sah, since we side-tracked back yondah to let the up train pass. If he hain’t said he was goin’ thoo with you, sah, I’d say he went back on that. He ain’t nowhar’ on the car, sah.”

Morgan frenziedly searched back and forth through the train, with no success. He interrogated the porter as to what the other man was doing when he had last seen him, and if he had noted anything wrong with him. He sent a telegram to the conductor on the up train and one to Smith, and was only deterred from returning by the thought that Emerson would surely look out for himself, and was probably a victim of his own absence of mind in a casual walk on the platform. At last the train drew into Chicago, and Morgan dropped off the steps as it came to a halt, and ran into the telegraph office for the answer to his message, and found none; and as he paused to decide

as to the course demanded by the situation, the conductor tapped him on the shoulder.

"This for you, sir?" said he.

It was a telegram addressed to Morgan Yeager in care of Conductor on Train Number Thirty. Morgan tore it open and read feverishly.

Yours received. Fugitive apprehended here this A. M. Come back on first train. Something seems to be getting ready to eventuate.—Smith.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### "GLAD CONFIDENT MORNING"

To some of us there is something very sad and pathetic in the contemplation of the defeat under which Olive Dearwester shrank back, when she went so swiftly and silently from Emerson Courtright's presence, and into her little study or den—where he might have had the right to enter and call all things his own.

There was consciousness of defeat in the field where heretofore victory had been so easy that she seldom thought of the blows she dealt, like those which had beaten John Bloodgood to earth, and made of Morgan Yeager a slave and a marionette, whenever she wished to use him. There *was* this consciousness: one would like to say that Olive, in this her great love, was superior to the bitterness which makes a woman scorned so wildly furious; but in truth she was so much of a woman that she was not above it. She felt the cold waves and hot flushes from head to foot which one feels when deep humiliation fills the breast. But this was not her dominant sensation.

She wanted Emerson Courtright to love and cherish—never did the old words of the service more exactly describe a woman's feelings and desires; and she looked forward to her life as blank and bare, and full of the tawdry and sordid and worthless and futile without him—one long, enormous frustration;

and she mourned her lost happiness, as mourn those only who listen to the tolling of the clock and turn the hot, wet pillow, sighing with quivering, indrawn breath—breath taken perforce by unbidden vital forces to keep mysteriously going a life long since grown useless. Yes, she felt all the pangs of the love-lorn—as some will say, no doubt, she deserved to do.

She felt—I rather dislike to set this down—she felt chagrin at the failure of her charms, her mere physical perfections and graces, to carry the citadel of any man’s resistance. She was quite in the habit of regarding all men as potentially hers. No girl had a sweetheart, no wife a husband, upon whom Olive Dearwester did not look as something upon which she could levy the process of her allurements and take him away. That she had never consciously done this was not strange; for she was wearied with the iteration of the wooings of men. They disgusted her with the quick-kindled desire which they called love; they bored her with their monotony of avowal, so much alike in every land and from those of every station; and her attitude was that of habitual antagonism or armed toleration. Yet, as concerned noble and commoner, low and high, she had up to this day looked upon herself as invincible, and upon all men as essentially rejected by her. Now, she blushed to remember, she had offered all these to this man, she had used every feminine stratagem of appeal to his eye, as she knew she had already done to his heart and his mind: and it hurt her bitterly, and angered her.

But fundamentally, the overpoweringly dominant note of her mood was the unbearable agony a mother



feels at the wasting of the life of her child. She yearned for Emerson in a brooding, maternal way, quite as much as in the way of a maid with a man. She thought of him wasting his life in a hopeless struggle with unconquerable forces. She saw him among those men who smote and maimed him. She imaged him to herself among the wild beasts of the labor war, like Enright, and thought of his war with that hired bravo; nor could she discern in this that seething of the caldron of growth, progress and reform which his vision, more mystic and prophet-like, saw. She saw, now, as she had not seen for months, that apparition of the bloody raiment, in the vapor and gore of the killing-floor, wielding that dreadful blade; and more than ever before, it became emblematic of the inferno into which he had replunged.

The light faded from her eastern wall, and the bookcases grew dark with the oncoming of night. No one came in to disturb her, and to all tappings upon her door she turned a deaf ear. Every member of her household, trained to obey her slightest whim, knew that the presence was not to be invaded; and Morgan went away without a farewell. Her mother once noiselessly opened the door and looked in; and withdrew because her instinct told her that the time had not yet come for the long embrace and silent comfort of motherhood. This it was for which she had waited in such inexplicable anxiety. This old woman knew her daughter well, and she also knew him who had gone away.

It was somewhere near midnight, when a man alighted from a north-bound train at the little chalet of a station across the lake, went swiftly down to the

shore, and looked across toward the bungalow. There were boats at the shore, and he stepped into one of them with no apparent thought as to its ownership, and shoved off. With strong, clean strokes, he rowed, as if desirous of making all possible speed consistent with a long pull. When the boatman came to look for the craft which had just come in with its burden of pleasers, it was gone, and he could hear in the distance the steady strokes of the thief.

In half an hour, it may be, the boat struck the other shore, and the oarsman looked about for the wharf which he had missed but narrowly, rowed to it, made fast the boat like one who acts rather by habit than of thought. He walked swiftly to the bungalow of the great soprano whose doings were so provokingly concealed from the curiosity of public and press, and rang the bell.

"Please tell Miss Dearwester," said he, to the astonished attendant of the door, "that Mr. Courtright has returned for a word with her."

"But—" began the maid.

"I must," said he. "Has she retired?"

"No," said the maid, "but she will see no one. She is in her library, and—"

He brushed by her and ran up the stairs and down the hall to the little room made into a study in an odd angle of wing and hall and roof. He tapped gently at the door, and then more loudly, and hearing no response, he opened the door and entered. It was dark, save for the slab of silver thrown on the floor by the westering moon, and the faint diffusion of light from this. At first he saw no one; and then, the dash of white on the floor by the couch seemed to move,

and there came from it a faint sound like a tremulous sigh. His heart leaped within his breast, as he knew by the great mass of black hair, and the contour of the form, that it was she, still dressed as when they had walked the fields together. She was lying on the bearskin rug, her arms thrown forward upon the couch, her face half hidden. The long black lashes lay down along the cheek in a troubled and restless sleep; and she seemed like a little child, lost and exhausted, and fallen asleep where slumber had overtaken her. He knelt beside her, and, slipping his hand under her waist, drew her up into his arms and held her close.

"Olive, darling, sweetheart!" this was what she heard, as the strange sensation of this embrace awakened her. "Look at me, dearest! It is I, Emerson. I have come back to you. I couldn't go away. I've come back to stay, if you'll let me—for ever!"

She had already, in prodigal lavishness of love, squandered every advantage which coquetry gives to a woman in driving the dear bargain of surrender. She had no unexpended balance of coyness, of feigned and half-believed unwillingness, of that resistance which so imperatively demands conquest. Perhaps it was this insolvency in woman's immemorial estate which struck her dumb except for certain incoherent endearments murmured over and over again as she hid her face upon his breast, and brought such a flood of weeping that his first test of understanding in the new sweet problem of his life was that of drying her tears with kisses and showing that he knew the joy with which she wept. A long, long time they sat there in the delicious abandonment of those hateful



"Look at me, dearest. I have come back to you." Page 448



reserves which had for so long bound them, and in the delight of broken barriers and fallen shackles.

Morgan Yeager, returning to the little Swiss-châlet station the next day, found Smith awaiting him. Yeager was something more impassive and Indian-like than ever before in Smith's experience with him, and expressed no surprise at the news which that adjunct of the American stage communicated to him. The man overboard had checked in about midnight last night, Smith said. It seemed to be a case of the ball returning to the hand that sent it away, yanked back by the India-rubber string of Dearwester's attractions: Lucky, lucky Jim! But they, Smith and Yeager, didn't have time to monkey with theories of *la grande passion*. Business was picking up. There were certain sordid conventions to which the most exalted and ethereal ecstasies must conform, and among them were such things as marriage licenses, ministers and telegrams for bookings in the transatlantic liners. Division of labor was the great secret of the effectiveness of modern production. Smith had heard Yeager himself say this, and therefore felt safe in asserting it. The present application of the theory was this marriage business; and he, Smith, had come over to intercept Morgan and send him off to attend to the matter of the license and the bribery of the office where the records were kept so it wouldn't get into the papers, while he, Smith, went hustling for a preacher. And, say, it would jar you to see the heavenly bliss steeped up to a million volts, of the parties immediately concerned. By George! it was enough to make a man want to go and get married over again himself!

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE SHADOW OF THE SYSTEM

The bride was up in her room, rosy with the hectic of nuptial mysteries. The bungalow, lighted and bedecked in the modest way which gave the affair the unstudied spontaneity fitting to it, hummed with the subdued clamor of suppressed excitement. The groom, exalted to the heights by the poetry of life, the cup of which again offered itself to his lips, was walking back and forth in his room, looking at existence in its new rose-color and gold, in which magic light it seemed to him there could be no doubt that this happiness would make him the greater force for the uplifting of his fellow-man, a mightier soldier of the common good. There could be no doubt of it. They had talked it all over so many times in the long hours of their new relationship. She would devote her art to the great work which he would do—she would be glad and happy to do it. She knew more of it than he imagined. All those nights and days of searching—it seemed impossible that she, this great woman with the splendid eyes and the thrilling voice, with the crown of night and the smile of dawn, with the kingdom of her conquest at her feet, had gone about in the big, sooty, wicked city, searching for him—all those days and nights had made her wiser than other women in the very things he knew so well and carried on his heart. He would gather strength

from her. It would be one of those marriages which the world loves to contemplate as perfect flowers of love, like those of the Brownings and the Mills. And, oh, the beauty and inexpressible sweetness and surprise of it all!

The trunks were ready for the flight by the day train to Chicago; thence by leisurely stages to New York and abroad. The engagements of Dearwester with the operatic magnates would be kept—as witnessed by the unenlightening names of Mr. and Mrs. E. Courtright on the list of passengers. It had given Morgan a strange twinge, as he wrote them in the telegram.

"We'll go just as soon as you can get ready, mommie," said Olive. "We, Emerson and I, are ready now, all—all but the little ceremony to-morrow morning."

"Who ready? Me?" asked Mrs. Dearwester. "Why, dollie, didn't you know that I'd graduated? My operatic career is at an end. No farewell tour for me!"

"Oh, ma!" cried Olive, "you don't mean that you're going to desert me and *The Cenci*, do you?"

"I mean," responded Mrs. Dearwester, "that I'm done hypering around from Dan to Beersheba and from pillar to post. I want a quiet life, and I've sent for your Aunt Nell to come here, and we're going to stay right in the bungalow until further notice. I've got tired of starting away twice to comin' home once, and meetin' myself going out whenever I come in at the front door. And, besides, I'm going to leave you and Emerson entirely undisturbed for your billing and cooing."



"Oh, ma," replied Olive, "don't be silly! You know we're too old to be foolish!"

"I hadn't noticed it," said ma.

And so they were going away alone, save for the very smallest number of servants with which a Dearwester could travel, this rosy bride up there in her room, and the buoyant groom walking back and forth, while they waited for Smith to come with the minister. Very impromptu, and all that; but cables from Brayton and the sailing of the ship made it necessary. And the bridegroom was as impatient as required by the most exalted standards of impatience set by the most thoroughly accepted legends of the days of chivalry, when the hero kills the dragon or solves the riddle at three P. M. and is married to the princess in time for the six-thirty caravan traveling by night to Samarkand, or the midnight boat from Brittany to the Western Isles; moreover, the bride was not displeased thus to be carried away and taken by storm. Honestly, now, what bride would be? Verily, it was high tide of all the blissful and stormful faculties with Olive and Emerson. And here at last comes Smith, with a black-coated gentleman in the carriage.

Send word to the regions above! The grave and reverend functionary who speaks spells is here! Prepare to be called upon, ye blessed ones of the irregular cardiac action: for the hour of your apotheosis—nay, the minute—approaches. *Tucket without. Enter the Wedding Cortège*—No, hang it! There are some other requirements for the census. Red tape! Red tape! So thinks Smith, who has all the impatience of one who has betted heavily, and sees the entries at the barrier.

"The license, and all those things," asked the minister, "they are all right and in form?"

"Sure," answered Smith.

"Then," said the minister, "I'll take down a few facts for my returns, as to age, place of birth, race, and so on, if you can give them to me."

"Further than their names, and I ain't sure about them, in the theatrical profession," replied Smith, "and that they are white, you can search me. Better send for the criminals themselves—or maybe the bride's mama can help out?"

"Quite possibly," replied the minister. "Shall I go to her, or will she—"

"I'll go for her," answered Smith, glad to get the matter off his hands.

The minister had had brief time to take stock of the evident costliness of the house and its furnishings, a costliness far more apparent here than from the outside, when a tall, erect, white-haired lady in silk attire came in with the unembarrassed mien of one who knows exactly what she is about—a woman with a face (though the minister could not have observed that, of course) from which anxiety had fallen and on which happiness had taken its place within eight-and-forty hours. Perhaps Mrs. Dearwester had not since the prairie days been quite so free from care and the anxiety of a mother—with such a daughter—as she was at this moment.

She stopped, however, as she approached the minister, and her hands went up in astonishment.

"Doctor Jones!" said she. "Why, what a surprise! What brings you to this, of all places in the world?"

"Can this be Mrs. Dearwester?" he exclaimed. "I

am astounded. And delighted! To think I should have found you here! I hope you and your—your daughter are well?”

“Quite well,” answered Mrs. Dearwester. “But, excuse me; I came down to meet the minister who is to officiate to-day, and won’t you sit down, Doctor, until I find him?”

“Ah—the minister—who is to officiate?” repeated the doctor. “I—I believe I am he. And who are the parties to be joined? Were you to tell me these facts?”

“You? Oh, yes!” said Mrs. Dearwester. “Why, I had forgotten, you being an educator, that you are a minister, too. The parties are—”

“Let me get my pen working,” said the doctor. “So pleasant to meet you here. Now! The lady’s name and age, please. . . . Olive? . . . . Oh, how delightful! Then I shall see her again! I am a stranger here, or doubtless I should have heard of this being her—of her being here. I had been told that the owner was—was on the stage. . . . Yes. . . . And now the happy bridegroom?”

“Emerson Courtright.”

Doctor Jones dropped the pen, and it rolled along the floor to the feet of Mrs. Dearwester, who picked it up and returned it. The doctor forgot to thank her.

“Emerson Courtright!” he echoed. “Then this is the place where he told me he was stopping a few days ago.”

“I suppose so,” answered Mrs. Dearwester. “But I don’t think he’s got anything contagious!”

“Oh, no! Certainly not!” answered the doctor,

noting the rising sharpness in the lady's tone. "But—but I was thinking—"

"Yes?" suggested Mrs. Dearwester after a long silence, during which he held his pen suspended over the blank on which he was filling spaces for names, as if some complex problem in mathematics had been in the process of working out, and he puzzled for the solution.

And truly a problem it was. Doctor Jones was a good man, whose life had been devoted to a work which he fondly hoped would live after him to bless generations to come, in the light and the power bestowed by education. He was also an able man, a diplomatic man, and one whose nerve-system was delicately adjusted to the multifarious outflows of force which govern these times of ours. He felt the effect of this ceremony upon the public mind even before he visualized it in his thought. He saw the front-page stories in all the newspapers, from sea to sea. The great Dearwester married! To whom? To Emerson Courtright, the unfrocked preacher who had left his wife and lost his ministry by reason of a *liaison* with her when she was only the pretty soprano of the First Church choir at Lattimore so long ago; and whose wife had obtained a divorce from him, in a suit in which, although for some unexplained reason her name had not been mentioned, it was well known that the soprano had appeared as the mysterious woman who should have been made the correspondent.

Ah, you say, but Doctor Jones knew Emerson and Olive, and their innocence? Yes, but this was a peculiar case. The guilt or innocence of Emerson

Courtright, while important, was not of the first significance. Doctor Jones knew that issue had never really been joined on that; and that his brother clergyman had been hounded from his pulpit and expelled from his family as a punishment for offending the great System under which church and school and state are made subject to the powers of wealth. If it had been an unjust accusation of adultery only, Doctor Jones was a man bold enough to have gone forth in the defense of his friend and shown to the world how flimsy was the charge, and how cruel the judgment. That would have been but to meet the ordinary perils of friendship's voyage. But this! In the first place, this was a divorced man, and the party at fault—so far as the records showed. There was a growing cry in the church against the divorce evil. Doctor Jones was at the head of an institution of learning. He could already feel the blow to be dealt him by the powers which had fought Mr. Courtright—he, a member of the church from which the minister had fled, president of the college the faculty of which this woman had disgraced, familiar with all the facts of the exposure and the divorce, and actively participating in the solemnization of this guilty marriage by giving it the sanction of the church! He could see the *Standard of Zion*, of which Doctor Bovee was editorial head, darkening every church home with its condemnatory frown, as the long leader rolled from its crisp wrapper for Sabbath reading. He could see the interviews in every paper over the country wherein meek clergymen took heroically intrepid ground against this growing horror which is undermining our homes—glad for once of an opportunity to attack

an evil with no vested financial interests. He saw his position as the head of Tudor College endangered, and he had not yet thought the matter down to the great Halliday, head of the Halliday Railway System, and the two or three millions of dollars to ask for which when it should please Mr. Halliday to come to this his domain with its private chapel, he, George Jones, D. D., Ph. D., and so on, and so on, was even now waiting. Mr. Halliday had withheld his first great gift until Mr. Courtright had been driven from the church with which the college was connected. The Halliday System was not operated along lines of any form of religion. Religion might say things about forgiveness, and utter its sweet *Judge not that ye be not judged*; but this was a matter of business. Dollars can not afford to forgive. This man had attacked the System. His utterances showed him to be fundamentally opposed to the great organization of business which had been built up so laboriously by Mr. Halliday and men like him, and under which labor was so much better off than it ever was before in the history of the world, if it only had the sense to see it, and not be led off into antagonism and violence by agitators like this man Courtright. Give three millions to Tudor College? Not three cents, as long as this man Jones who condones Courtright's offense by—

"Mrs. Dearwester," said Doctor Jones, "I believe that Mr. Courtright's old friend Mr. Yeager is here. Will you please send him in to me?"

Mrs. Dearwester, somewhat mystified by this sudden change in Doctor Jones' manner, withdrew and sent in Morgan.

"Mr. Yeager," began Doctor Jones hesitantly, "I

am afraid that I shall have to decline the task of performing this ceremony—”

“Why?” asked Morgan; so sharply and suddenly that the good doctor started as if a cannon had been shot off.

“Well,” said the doctor, “there is this divorce in the history of the bridegroom, you know.”

“Your church doesn’t forbid the remarriage of divorced persons,” asserted Morgan.

“Not exactly,” assented the doctor. “But ministers are now expected to inquire into the facts; and the remarriage of the person at fault is frowned upon.”

“Well, what’s that to do with this case?” interrogated Morgan. “You know the facts. I talked them over with you at the time. You thought then that the use of the charge against Mr. Courtright by the Bloodgoods and their committee in forcing Mr. Courtright to resign or blast the reputation of a good girl, as well as his own, was unchristian and villainous—and you know that he is the party wronged, and most bitterly wronged. Why do you mention the matter of blame, as accounting for this refusal? There’s some other reason. What is it?”

“I remember our conversation,” recommenced the doctor, “and of course I must admit—why, Yeager, I know he’s innocent! But I’m tied up with these people, Yeager, and I shall weaken my influence for good—”

“For what?”

“For good, Mr. Yeager. All the good in the world is not done by destructive efforts like yours and Mr. Courtright’s. I—”

“I see, Doctor Jones,” interrupted Morgan. “I see

how it will affect the marital relations of the church and her modern spouse, Mammon. I see how it will violate the tenor of your bond to the plutocracy under which you sold yourself for an endowment. I will call in Mrs. Dearwester and explain the necessity of a postponement!"

Doctor Jones sat in a state of alternate anger, remorse and shame while Morgan remained outside. Yeager met Smith in the hall, and asked him if he knew where the maids were, or the whereabouts of Mrs. Dearwester.

"She's coming in from the flower-bed," answered Smith. "What's wrong, Yeager? What makes you look so down in the mouth?"

"We'll have to postpone the ceremony," answered Morgan. "The minister raises some objections to—to the way the record stands. I can't explain, Smith; but it will have to be postponed."

"Postpone nothing!" scoffed Smith. "The preachers aren't the only functionaries on earth. What's the matter with the justice of the peace back here on the farm, that fined us for fishing without a license? Won't he do, if—"

"Get him!" said Morgan. "It may not quite suit the parties, but—"

"Shucks!" replied Smith. "Those whiskers will add the lacking element of low comedy and wild picturesqueness to the grouping—I'm off. Keep things in line, and I'll be back in a quarter of an hour."

Doctor Jones, increasingly ill at ease, was not at all reassured by the reappearance of Mrs. Dearwester and Mr. Yeager. The old lady's eyes gleamed omin-



ously, and she gripped in her hand a bouquet of flowers, crushed to a pulp by her strong fingers. There was battle in her eye.

"I am not much surprised," said she, "to learn from Mr. Yeager here that my girl is to suffer another humiliation for her early indiscretion in associating with the nest of snakes and scorpions known as the First Church of Lattimore. I wasn't at all pleased, I may say, when I saw one of that gang put in an appearance to have anything to do with my girl's marriage. I felt that there must be something wrong. Mr. Yeager will give you your fee for coming, and will add something to put into some fund for easy lessons in Christianity to the Bible class. Words of three letters will be best. Don't break the fact that the church is anything but a social club to 'em too suddenly. I don't expect 'em to reform so far as to keep many of the commandments; but they might by easy steps learn that the law of love ain't quite in harmony with the use of a great organization supposed to be Christian as a club to beat a poor defenseless girl into the earth with slander, and as a dagger to stab her good name with. We used to have a gang of cattle thieves out west from which missionaries in practical Christianity might be got to stand the moral stench of your crowd for a while, and lift you up to the level of mere grand larceny. I s'pose you were invited here, and I may be doing something in bad taste in telling you this little fragment of the truth about the crowd you train with; but if so, remember that you've insulted me and my girl, and take your departure as soon's you conveniently can."

"Mrs. Dearwester," said the doctor, "you will some-

time be very sorry for the intemperateness of your speech—”

“Sorry?” she retorted. “I’m sorry now! I feel as if I’d had to whip a fool because there didn’t seem to be any other way to get to him—and I shall never forgive myself for being forced to do such a thing. Oh, Doctor Jones, I know all you could say to justify yourself. I’ve been a member of the church since before you were born. I went into it because I thought it was the Way of Life. I’ve seen it controlled by greed and avarice and the powers of darkness, until I grow sick at the thought of what I used to think and what I know now. I’ve knelt at the communion-rail and took the bread and wine from the fingers of men that cringed to all the robbery and theft of this day—all that happened to be in their congregation—with a whole row of folks kneeling by the side of me that you couldn’t for your life tell, not with a magnifying-glass, by the way they did business or loved their fellow-men, from the folks that were off at picnics or doing other worldly things out in the world. I was a poor ignorant girl when I went into the church, and I was old before I begun comparing the people that gave me the right hand of fellowship with the folks outside—an’ I didn’t find ’em a bit better. I found ’em worse, it looked to me, because the folks outside didn’t seem to be quite such hypocrites. If I don’t find salvation, it’ll be you and such as you chaffering in the market for money, money, money—money got by evil to do good with, and cringing before the Deweys and Aylesburys and Bloodgoods and Hallidays, and shutting your eyes against evil because you don’t dare say anything def-

inite about the wicked for fear some of 'em'll think you're personal—it'll be such that'll be responsible for darkening my way so I couldn't find it. You saw my girl traduced and slandered; and you drove her from your employment with lying excuses of lack of funds. You knew she was as innocent as a dove; and you daren't for your life say so above a whisper. And now you find this boy and girl, after all this time, brought together and about to go out to the world in honorable marriage; and you raise this flimsy, miserable, contemptible excuse! I don't want you here! I de—"

"Just a moment, mother, dear!"

It was Emerson who spoke. He had come down because of his knowledge that the minister would desire to see him, and had heard the hot outburst of Olive's mother. She stopped at his word, and stood submissive, as under the rebuke of her spiritual father.

"I have heard enough to understand the reason of—of this conversation. I think that mother does you an injustice, Doctor Jones; but you will surely see the reason of the feeling she has shown. I never blamed you for the things she mentioned. I was taking my own course—and long before that, I knew it must be a lonely one. I had to put my career in pawn for the success of my reform, or lose my own soul; but I do not charge you with perfidy to Christ's cause, because what you have done would be perfidy for me. We are under a money despotism, as insolent and ruthless as the despotism of the czar. I chose to light a bomb and die in its explosion that I might call men to resistance by the sight of what I did. You chose to go on and conform to the rule of the

money-czar—and build up something good—something as good as it would let you build—with its own riches. Don't think that I can't see the reasons which impel you to do this."

"Thank you, Courtright!" said Doctor Jones. "I thank you from my heart! And now, let us go on with the ceremony. I don't know that you understand why I hesitated—"

"Yes!" exclaimed Emerson, "I understand so well that I shall not allow you to put in jeopardy your interests by performing these services. It will not do! It is so little a thing upon which to find shipwreck! No, George Jones, when you join issue with the powers of evil, and go forth as a soldier of the common good in the war for the Kingdom of God on earth, where Jesus preached that it would be established, I don't want to see you at such a disadvantage as in this matter of marrying an expelled preacher to an actress. I want you to go forth panoplied in the full armor of God, to a conflict chosen by yourself, and ready to lose all, as a Christian ought, for the true gospel of good tidings to the poor—the economics of Jesus."

"I'd rather go on!" insisted the doctor, pressing Emerson's hand. "I believe it is best for me. I want to do the right thing this once, and not the politic thing. What our sister here says, is true—only, Mrs. Dearwester, you do not give credit—"

"Right in here, Mr. Dunham!"

It was the voice of Smith, and was followed by Smith himself accompanied by a long-whiskered farmer with a peaked nose, who carried a yellow-bound book of legal forms.

"You here, yet, Mr. Jones?" said Smith. "I thought the deal was off with you, and I went and got Mr. Dunham, here, who is a magistrate. Ladies and gentlemen, this is Squire Dunham."

"Glad to meet yeh, ladies an' gentlemen," said Mr. Dunham. "An' now, if yeh'll please fetch the parties before me as soon as yeh kin, I'd like to git back to my pertaters."

The smutch of tarnish and stain on the rose-color and gold of half an hour ago showed indefinitely in the bridegroom's face, as the two met before the bearded farmer with the book of forms open before him; but it disappeared as he saw the soft light of happiness shining in the eyes henceforth to be the stars of his sky. Again came the sweet, incredible surprise of it all in the endeavor to exalt his perceptions to the plane of understanding that this dearest and purest and fairest and most loving of women was giving herself to him.

The onlookers saw nothing comic in the patriarchal farmer with no waistcoat to hide his open-throated shirt, as he stood in grave dignity and groped his way through the unfamiliar ceremonial. The very slowness of it lifted it to something epic; and to Morgan, at least, it seemed like a solemn contract before some rustic priest of the god of fields and forests. Would he take this woman to be his lawful wedded wife? "Yes!" he said; and they seemed to hear in the low response a flood of promise of the tenderness, the fidelity, the great, deep thankfulness with which he took this woman, to be hers for ever. Would she take this man to be her husband? Thus the brief interrogation of the priest of Pan, anxious to go

back to the plain toil that stained the knobby finger with which he followed his reading and held the place, as he threw up his long wisp of beard in looking through his glasses at the splendid creature who stood thus to be questioned by him. "Yes," she replied, her voice steady with the high resolve that the fond task of making straight his path of life should be her one happiness. And then: "I pronounce you man and wife!"

Joyce Gray turned and kissed the bridegroom with tears of sweet sentiment in her eyes; and Morgan found himself facing Olive, who took both his hands, and squeezed them in a fervor of affectionate cruelty.

"Kiss me, Morgan!" said she. "After Emerson, you are first!"

Morgan stooped over ever so little, and kissed her lingeringly on her forehead. Not so Smith, who pressed to the limit the privileges accorded by ancient usage, of taking that in public to which but one shall have claim in private for ever—the free gift of the shell from which the kernel has been abstracted. Not so even the wholesome old farmer, who took his kiss and gallantly said that as far as he was concerned his fee was paid, then and there. But Doctor Jones, repentantly inconsistent in remaining, came timidly up and respectfully lifted the dear bride's hand to his lips, and courteously wished them well, and added the fervent "God bless you both!" which took the place, let us hope, of the prayer he was not asked to offer up. And Odette Cassler and Joyce Gray both kissed and hugged Emerson, and then, because it seemed quite the right thing, both did the same to Morgan, who somehow failed to rise to the

opportunities of the occasion, and was supplanted by the ubiquitous Smith, who was slapped by his Titania while endeavoring to bestow a supernumerary salute upon the pouting red lips of the tall and shapely contralto of the Athenians. Squire Dunham vowed that they were as lively and good-looking and happy a crowd as he ever saw, and if that wasn't a likely couple to look at, he should like to be shown one. There was throwing of rice and old shoes when the victoria rolled off along the boulevard with Olive and Emerson Courtright, who tried very, very hard to behave in such a way as not to give Johnson, the coachman, any tales to tell when they were gone, while the others went across the lake with the baggage in the launch. The Smiths were going to Chicago with them, and so was Morgan. Joyce stayed to be of comfort to Mrs. Dearwester until after Aunt Nell should come.

It was full midday as they wound along the boulevard, and high noon with their souls. The five miles spun off like a breath, and they saw their friends in the little chalet waiting for the train. To the Smiths, it all seemed like a very commonplace ride—Olive and her new fad—as they sometimes, in perfect respect, called him—being so very well-behaved and sensible. Emerson, though, was keenly alive to the stolen glances which met his, and the enchanting sight of the wonderful specimen of all that was delectable which rode so close to him that he could fancy he heard the throbbing of the fond heart. Morgan Yeager stayed in some out-of-the-way corner—and, it must be confessed, was little missed. He was with them, however, and knew why it was that Olive pulled

down the shade of their window as they went by the slums and purlieus of Chicago, and so occupied Emerson's attention that he never looked out, or knew that they were passing through the scenes of his work with the submerged tenth until they rolled into the Wells Street station, where they all took carriages for Olive's apartments overlooking the lake.

"You must come in and dine with us, Morgan," said Olive.

"Yes, old man," added Emerson, "we shall see all too little of you before we go away."

They were a pretty company as they sat at dinner, Odette with her flaxen hair and petite form; Olive with a deepening color in her cheeks, and her superb affluence of charm; Emerson with the pale brow, curling brown hair, sensitive nostril and lip, and compelling comeliness; the good-looking Smith; the rather somber but impressive Yeager—and over all that aroma of romance, that all-pervading sense of unfolding mystery which hung about this bride and groom.

Smith and Odette went away to their rooms very early, and Emerson and Morgan were left alone by Olive, while they talked over many things which Emerson left for Morgan to do while he was gone—once he said, "until he came back." Then Olive came and sat with them while they went over their plans for the European trip, told him how they loved him, what a dear friend to them he must always be, how he must never think of allowing himself to feel that they were as far from him as brothers and sisters would be, how Emerson would make certain investigations for him in European libraries—and then the clock struck an hour so late that Morgan—in a little queer



embarrassment—said that he really must go, and went. The picture of the two, standing close together, and smiling on him as he walked to the lift, was a pretty one, and one which he never forgot. He thought of it many, many times that night, and for long afterward. As for them, they listened until the sound of his footsteps died away in the distance, and with their arms wound about each other, they walked back into the satin luxury of the diva's mysterious nest.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### LETTERS FROM HEAVEN

It was fortunate indeed that Morgan Yeager so successfully bribed the public officials up there in Wisconsin, that the marriage of Emerson and Olive failed to find its place as news until after Mr. and Mrs. E. Courtright had left our shores for lands where reporters are not so numerous, and where the personal appearance of the bride was not quite so universally familiar as here. For the comments of the press make their way everywhere; and what was said was not kind. Mrs. Dearwester shut the papers from her house after seeing one account in a grave Chicago journal, in which Dearwester was pictured in a blotch of drawing surrounded by a narrow margin of slander, as driving Zozo and Zizi back to their stools. Her new plaything was a poodle wearing a surplice, and furnished with a countenance like Mr. Courtright's, but distorted into an expression of sanctimoniousness which drove Mrs. Dearwester into a fury. In order to account for Emerson's disappearance since his "flight," as it was called, from Lattimore, it was suggested (in a paragraph headed, "Where has She Kept Him?") that the "bruiser, agitator and preacher," the Reverend Mr. Courtright, had been in some way, and under another name, a camp-follower of the prima-donna, during her triumphal campaign from the ballet to the spot-light. Oh, it was a wretched,

wretched business, and the old lady was as nearly heart-broken as one in her state of rage could be as she wrote to Morgan to do something, for Heaven's sake, to set her dear, dear girl right before the world.

"If it were only an ordinary scandal of theatrical life," Morgan replied, "I could do something. In fact, as you will see by the enclosed clippings, I have been writing the other side of it for the *Observer*, and I have had myself interviewed in the *Times* and the *Leader*—but what good is it? Even the *Observer* handles it in a way which makes the most of the worst construction possible, and prints stories sent out from Lattimore which make me grind my teeth; and what can any one do, when the opportunity arises for a commercialized press to pander to the wishes of the great interests in both ecclesiastical and industrial life, to 'do up that hypocrite and anarchist Court-right'? I have done all I could. There is only one course for us to pursue, and that is to shut our ears to the vile stuff, until another nine-days' sensation arises, and the great public forgets—and to hope that Olive and Emerson may be where they will neither hear nor see it. There is one comfort—she is like a queen in this, that no one is likely to say anything unpleasant to her. I am more sorry for you than I can say. I instructed Amelie to see to it that no newspaper stories of this sort should be allowed to get to her mistress or to Mr. Courtright during their travels. She seemed to understand, and you know how sharp she is. I do not think that they will care much for the newspapers, anyhow."

Of course not. They walked the deck of the great liner clothed in that reversed cloak of invisibility

which shuts out the world from those who wear it. Olive's eyes gazed through and beyond those who sought to scrape acquaintance with the great singer, or to profit by former and forgotten introductions, and the groups gathered on deck to look at them as they sat feasting their eyes on the new heaven and the new sea, were as naught to the lovers. There was this of blissful advantage in their life, that neither of them had passed through the long period of anticipation, and so they found constant surprise in discovering themselves together. Newspapers! They had volumes and volumes of news for each other, imprinted in the secret limited editions of memories opened day by day to just the two of them. There was no other printed thing made since Gutenberg which could tempt them.

Soon their letters began coming, and then Morgan and the mother were reassured.

"We are here in our old quarters," wrote Olive from London, "and if you were with us we should be perfectly, sublimely happy. I wonder, mommie, how I ever faced life as I used to do with no dear fellow in it, who knows me so much better than I know myself, and loves even my faults!

"We met Brayton and Mr. Wigmore yesterday. B. was quite as of old. He isn't of the sort who allows a mere matter of the heart to interfere with his relations with his star. He thinks of nothing but *The Cenci* now. Mr. Wigmore says he met us at that gorgeously illuminated garden-party of Lady Emmert's—when we were here last, and I said 'Oh, yes, certainly!' but I don't remember him at all. He is a little stooped gentleman, with glazed eyes, but

such a musician! We went over the scores of *The Cenci* together, and while I think the orchestration is just a little over-elaborated in spots, there is a somber poignancy about the Beatrice passages that ought to bring us the real success we crave—besides luring out the lovers of the terrible and the seekers after new thrills. Preparations for its production on Broadway are already well forward, and Emerson and I must away on our wanderings and our vacation, so that the rehearsals may not too long be deprived of the presence of your little girl.

“I must get my boy away to the green fields and mountains. There is so much in London that reminds him of the West Side—about which I don’t want him to think. I keep thinking, when I look at him, of these lines:


‘O wild, sad bird, O wind-spent bird, O bird upon the wave!’

‘And then I think with horror of the next line, and try to forget it; but somehow, I can’t. But, I’ve made him happy, happy, for a little while, anyhow. If I could only so arrange my life that it could be spent and ended with his, and all given to make up for the world’s inhumanity to him thus far, I should like to do it.’

“What is the next line, I wonder?” asked Morgan, when Mrs. Dearwester read this letter to him.

“I happened to remember,” replied Mrs. Dearwester. “It is in *The Hills of Dream*.

‘O wild, sad bird, O wind-spent bird, O bird upon the wave!  
There is no home for thee, wild bird, but in the cold sea  
grave!’



Ollie used to repeat a string of verses that had that in it; but how she can let herself think of them in that connection—she oughtn't to do it."

Morgan had been invited to the bungalow for a week-end, as was the case every few weeks. Mrs. Dearwester said he seemed the only one left, except her old sister, that she could feel like folks toward. The letters from abroad were carefully saved and (with certain expurgations) read at these meetings. Both were glad and relieved as the weeks rolled by and brought no indication that the horrible things said after their wedding had reached them.

They kept away from the cities and the places where tourists congregate. They even sent their servants by train whenever they could, and followed by motor-car or boat, the two quite alone. In Switzerland they walked for days among the mountains, by the tremendous beauty of which the prairie-bred Emerson was exalted to a poetic fervor which struck him silent, as they sat on the green mountain sward for long halts, while his eyes remained fixed upon some awful chasm or towering summit, his arm about the waist of the girl who looked more at him than at the scenery.

"When did you begin to love me?" she would inquire, quite unexpectedly, while Emerson was gazing at something which to the unregenerate mind might have been supposed to be outside her personality—a cathedral half fallen into ruin, or a shepherd's cottage, or a roaring waterfall. But such a question never came to Emerson as inappropriate.

"Sweetheart," he would say, "I have always loved you; but sometimes I didn't know just what woman you might be embodied in."

"I don't mean that way," she protested, glowing at the tribute; "but when did you begin to love me as Olive?"

"Back on the prairie," answered Emerson, "almost as soon as ever I saw you. That was why I tried so hard to make you see beyond the horizon, that lay so flat and took in a circle of such bleak monotony. I could see your eyes, so big and black and questioning that they seemed to beg of me for something to see—"

"And you gave me something, dearie!" she answered, "you gave me all I have. But I believe I began first—though I didn't know it. I cried all night when you went away. I'll bet you didn't. I know it isn't fair to say it; but I'll bet—I'll bet you never shed a tear!"

It was from a little hamlet far up on the Back Rhine that Emerson wrote Morgan one letter which furnished food for thought when the two friends read their missives together, by the wood fire, in the bungalow, while the autumn leaves drifted down upon the gray lawn.

"We came here to the heart of Graubünden," he wrote, "because Olive said the Alps beckoned us away from Lake Maggiore, and we had a chance to ride with some peasants to the top of the grade at San Bernardino Pass, from whence we walked alone down here to the railway at Thusis. We shall go on to Zurich from here, where we shall again be in the atmosphere of caste and servitude which has oppressed me everywhere in Europe except here in Graubünden, where the porter in an inn takes up

your luggage and looks you fairly in the eye as he takes for his services exactly what is his due. I have found nothing like this except in the unspoiled parts of America. I used to think there was truth in the line 'The *mountain* nymph sweet Liberty' until I knew Cripple Creek and the Cœur d'Alene, and saw how men are crushed and exploited and enslaved by the great mining companies which ruin and rule Colorado and Idaho. But the mountain nymph lives in Graubünden, and has since many centuries ago, when the mountaineers rose and chased the aristocratic oppressors from the canton by the light of their burning castles. The people have ruled since then, for the oppressors never returned. For all these hundreds of years, these mountaineers have held their own, a democracy, free from poverty, and free from the domination of their 'superiors.' I breathe freely here. I could almost have wished as we trudged down the road, that the dear girl and I were going to a little wooden hut somewhere on a sunny slope, where I could cut wood or tend sheep, and we could live for each other, freed from all that system of nightmares which makes up our civilization. Nature is hard, here, but kindly, like the men and women. Ah! if only the thrill could once run through America, to burn up with the fire of the ballot the castles of the robber-barons of their exploiters, and make their own Graubünden, from sea to sea!

"Olive and I are seeing the happiest days of our lives here in these mountains. At evening we are tired as peasants, and sink into dreamless sleep which makes the night but a moment. Ah, Morgan, I wonder if you can know how happy I am, and what



it means to me, this sweet companionship! And to think of the horror of lust and lechery into which its poverty plunges the world of the cities, where men and women are fenced apart by the stress which will not let them marry—crimes which are nothing more or less than the growing twisted and awry under the pressure of injustice, of the very love that under freedom makes for such happiness as ours! We are making this splendid pilgrimage, attended by the glories of mountain peak and prismatic sky, sung to sleep by the murmuring river, and lifted up to the very heights of the soul, not because we are any better than other brides and bridegrooms, but because we happen to be possessed of what all might have if the old ‘good tidings to the poor’ were not everywhere rejected and condemned.

“I wish you would go over and see Tim and Mary Burns, give them my love, and find out all you can about my people. The little Hugi girl is growing up so fast that I begin to tremble for her—she was so pretty, and attractive. Hugi has a little cigar store over on Blue Island Avenue—Burns will tell you where it is, and Mollie is looking out for Josepha. Find out about Jack Enright, too, and tell him I inquired after him, if you happen to see him. His lungs are bad, you know; and how can they improve in that smoke and soot?”

A part of this Morgan omitted, although Mrs. Dearwester suspected its nature, I think, when he paused, cleared his throat and leaped to the middle of a sentence.

“I guess,” said she, “that Emerson’s mind has got

its permanent bent, and that Ollie can't wean him from it."

"Why," said Morgan, "do you think she'd wish to do it?"

"Not exactly," was the answer, "but if he could come to look at things more as you do, and not tear himself to pieces over the wrongs of the masses, I think she'd be the happiest girl in the world."

Morgan sat turning this over and over in his mind for a long time; and when he returned to Chicago, he went to see the Burnses, and took Emerson's old room in their flat. He felt rebuked, although Mrs. Dearwester, he knew, meant no reproof. He felt himself weighed and measured and valued, and classified as a reformer who wished to accomplish reform by writing and talking about the poor, rather than living their life, or meeting them heart to heart.

Olive knew of these thoughts of her husband's and they talked together of the old life out there in the free poverty of the plains, and in the jumbled mystery of injustice of the cities. One day in Ghent she told him of the men she had seen drifting from saloon to saloon in the bitter nights of Chicago, of the horrible lodging-houses, of the crowd on Fifth Avenue waiting before the newspaper offices for the first paper with its "want ads"—each with his cent in his hand, and wondering if his weakened limbs would carry him to the place where some man might hire him, and then, wonderingly, he asked her how she had come to see all this.

"I was looking," said she, blushing, "for you; but I didn't tell any one what I wanted."

"For me?"

"Yes, dearie," said she. "Don't laugh at me; but after we met there—at that place where I sang—I couldn't sleep. You looked so poor, and so friendless, that it seemed to me that you must be in want, somewhere in that dreadful city; and every night I lay and thought, and wondered what happened to men who became lost in that wilderness—and I went looking for you. At first I took Amelie: and then Morgan found out about it—and he went with me."

"Did he know?" asked Emerson.

"We never spoke—of you," confessed Olive. "We—"

She stopped in a little embarrassment. Her husband could easily see why it was that she could not tell Morgan the real object of her search; but she did not feel free to violate Morgan's secret, or hint the truth as to his attitude toward her. Emerson sat in silence, seeing the vision of the dark, bitter, windy, snowy, sooty nights, with their blasts howling in from the prairie or moaning across from the lake, and these two old friends searching the faces of the outcasts and pariahs for him.

"We finally ceased to look," she added. "It grew warmer, and they were fewer, and not so miserable—and it was then that that man Bloodgood grew so crazy and foolish and threatening."

And then, as he still sat so quietly holding her hand in his, she took him in her arms and told him that she had found him at last, and that he was hers, was hers, in spite of all the world, and he must never, never, do anything to make her hold on her recovered treasure less firm than it was at that moment.

He wrote to Morgan that night, telling him that his

mind was too full for sleep, until he had written some of the things that kept him awake—thoughts of what Olive had told him fully for the first time with reference to their search for him. Sometimes he had wondered at his inability to make those who were nearest to him understand his motives, and saddened at their coldness, turning to enmity; but here were two old friends, one his dear wife, now, and the other, for ever closer to his heart than a brother, who caused him to wonder at their devotion. Two things always would make him choke up when he thought of them: one was the thought of his splendid, dainty queen searching for him through such a place as that lodging-house over on Des Plaines Street, where the bunks rose in tiers, foul and hard, and the human derelicts lay on the worn boards, with their shoes wrapped in their coats for pillows; and the other the vision of the steam and reek of the killing-floor with its oozing blood and its wavering wail of agony—and this fond girl looking through the clouds of vapor at him, the most terrible figure in all the hell of modern industry.

“I can scarcely bear to think,” he wrote, “what life would have been for me had it not been for that boyish freak which took me out into the old school-house, and gave me you—and her. The world has been good to me, Morgan. It gave me you to set my feet in the way of life, when I was wallowing in the wallow of the Pharisee. And when I had begun to distrust all that part of man’s life which distinguishes the man from the monk, came this new experience that takes me back to the days when I dreamed of woman’s love as a thing too sacred to be touched.

You know what I mean, I think, if you *have* refused to receive it into your own life."

This part of the letter Morgan did not read to Mrs. Dearwester. In fact, he put the letter in his pocket and walked long miles through the streets before finishing the epistle for himself, after reading this.

"Here in Ghent," went on Emerson, "I find an organization of laborers, in coöperative endeavor, the like of which I did not think was in the world. The weavers and porters and bakers—all trades—are united in a state within a state, called the *Voorhuit*. Why, they even have a theater—where they give representations of the tragedy and mystery of life as was done in the times of Shakespeare and Æschylus, and as they do in the Yiddish theater on the East Side in New York. They do not seem to care for the things which 'keep their thoughts from the cares of life,' as our public seems to do; but these worn men and women, who earn at most five dollars a week, sit and look fixedly at the tragedy of life as depicted by their fellow-workmen in their own play-house. It is wonderful! And they have set up in their midst one of their own number who is winning fame as a sculptor—devoting his art to his people. Olive and I are both happier now than ever to think that she rejected that piece *Higgledy-Piggledy*, and is to be Beatrice in *The Cenci*.

"But about the *Voorhuit*: this wonderful coöperative movement has the thing which our George movement more and more lacks—the sense of solidarity,

and the passion for co-living. These men and women are all socialists; and they thrill with a strange exaltation for the fraternal state. And the George movement has ceased to be a movement, and has become an intellectual cult by which comfortable men seek to act on the thought of the world. It lacks the passion which promised to win the world when the forty thousand marched through the streets of New York in the first George campaign—before I knew anything about it; and which sent you out a tramp to stick Blackhall stamps over the blank-walls of half a dozen states, and to go to jail in Lattimore, and set on fire one who wonders now what his future relations to the battle for industrial liberty will be. And, yet, this city shows how marvelously right George is as to the cause of poverty. These people have accomplished the coöperative state. They have nearly all socialism can give them; and their state is the most miserably poverty-stricken in the cities of Europe. The very economies of their coöperative activities have liberated a greater and greater surplus fund which the landlords of Ghent take from them in rents. Land values rise because the poor people so order their affairs as to make their living cost less; and wages are less by the week than a Chicago laborer gets in two days. But in the *Voorhuis* they are learning the lesson of the bees and ants and prairie-dogs—how to live together on terms of righteousness; and sometime they will go out and take the fingers of monopoly from the land, and they will be free at last, this old, rebellious, turbulent city of Ghent. After all, Morgan, this is a great time to live in. This civilization is not to reel back into decrepitude and

death as all others have done; it will go on, and solve the riddle of co-living, and rise to the heights of that Kingdom of God which Jesus tried to usher in with community of goods. When goods are as plenty as they might be, there won't be anything repulsive in virtual community which we already have in such things as matches and newspapers—things cheap and plentiful. I'm nothing but a preacher, you see, after all. It is the one thing I'm good for; and the so-called church of God drives me out!"

With the waning of summer, and the setting in of winter, came the memorable first Broadway rendering of *The Cenci*—a musical *tour de force* which has gone into history, and the literature of the subject, and has made two or three big reputations. It is said that never since the interpolation of the *Prayer of Moses at the Red Sea*, by Rossini, with its wonderful change of key, has such an effect been produced by music as that which filled the house with sobs and cries at Olive Dearwester's singing of the great aria in the prison scene, where, torn and wrenched from the torture, Beatrice, still refusing to call what she has done a crime, yet rejects the offer of Alessandro in that passage so rich with the sense of the preciousness of her lost purity, that it outranks even the high scorn of taint in the Isabel of *Measure for Measure*. The old lady with the white hair up there in the box beside the stocky, brown-eyed man with the pepper-and-salt hair—why is it, do you suppose, that when the lights flashed on after the curtain, she sits there with the tears running down her cheeks, while she tries to look as if nothing has affected her? And

why is it, that the stocky man laughs so nervously at what the old lady says to him?

"I wish," said she, looking distressfully at him, "that, seein' this ain't a funeral, I could quit my darned bawling!"

This merely proves that the habits of speech of many years' standing will return in moments of excitement—even on Broadway, and to a person in elegant evening dress; and to the discerning, it will place Mrs. Dearwester among the most enviable of those present. Even more enviable than Morgan, to whom the star gave a bewildering embrace in the wings! Perhaps more to be envied than the handsome lover, like the herald Mercury, who so tenderly cared for her from the stage entrance to the hotel, and who held her so closely in his arms as she asked over and over again:

"Did I do it well? As well as it could be done? Are you proud of me, sweetheart? Prouder than you would have been in *Higgledy-Piggledy*? Was it better than *The Queen of Atlantis*? Did you ever think of such a thing as this when I sang *The Star-spangled Banner* for you; or *The New Kingdom*; or *Crucifix*? Do you remember how the people cried and moaned that night at Angus Falls, just as they did here to-night? But that was your eloquence, dearie. Yes, it was, too. Well, maybe the song had just a little to do with it; but I couldn't have sung the song if it hadn't been for the eloquence. Hold me closer, sweetheart; and don't forget, ever, that all I do would fall flat if it weren't for the feeling of you back in my heart. It's always been so, always, dear!"

Taken all in all, we shall agree that Emerson was



the one most to be envied. And yet, after a long, long while, he said:

"Dearest, I asked Morgan to wait for me down in the lobby. He brings bad news of my people in Chicago. Jack Enright has gone back to his old ways, and Burns thinks that Connors has been corrupted, and is about to plunge the Union into a strike. This may call for my—for what I can do down there. I shall be back—"

"No, no, no!" she cried. "I can't spare you, dear. I can't, I can't! Send word down to Morgan that you can't come. Really, really, dearest Emerson, I must talk to you—a long, long talk."

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### CALLED TO THE COLORS

There had been nothing in the nature of a shock to Morgan Yeager in the marriage of his two old friends. Except in the mere matter of having her confession of it in words, Olive had long made known to him so much of her heart's open secret, that he had foreseen the culmination of these long years of regard whenever fate should see fit to bring the two together. Moreover, Morgan had acquired the habit of service with no reward in view but the act itself. The prevailing tone of his whole spiritual attitude was of this character, and in his relations with Olive the altruism was accentuated. Everybody served her, and nobody asked further recompense than a smile or a song; and how many of these he had received! He was the most fortunate man in the world—except one; and he the one next to her for whom he would most gladly give himself. It was all right.

So he said to himself day by day, as he took up as well as he could the work which Emerson laid down that day when the primal call had been stronger than his love for these needy ones—in yielding to which, he may have forfeited the esteem of some of the more perfectly perfect of his acquaintances.

From his lodgings with the Burnses, Morgan ranged about in the wilderness of the West Side, from the bridge on the south—and even on to the Yards—to

the bridge on the north, with Halsted Street as the median line of his operations. He found the little Hugi girl "who was growing up so fast," and did all he could to save her from the undertow by mooring her to a night school. He became known at the fruit store of Anaganostopoulos and Zenas, at the sweat-shop where the Lezerowski family made shirts, at Mrs. Petersen's boarding-house, at the laundry of William Washington the negro, at Conway's saloon—at all the places where the name of Strangler Courtright gave his friend the entrée, and where so many were insatiable in their thirst for information as to the things he had done. He had once had land, had he, and tenants? He was a priest, was he? And the great ones of the church had driven him out because he was the friend of the poor?

"No," Morgan would answer, "but because he wanted justice for the poor. Not all the friends of the poor were in favor of justice for them; but many wanted the poor to be contented, and not to object to the things which take away what they produce, and give them nothing for it—or only the smallest living they know how to accept. But Courtright had wanted to change the laws so that what a man made he could keep."

Heads were shaken, and many exclamations uttered; but it is doubtful if Morgan's qualifying explanations accomplished their mission in keeping the record straight. In fact, the legend spread over the West Side that Strangler Courtright had been a rich man like Rockefeller, and had been banished from trust circles because he wanted the man who made a coat to wear it; and that he had given back his

lands to his tenants, had broken jail and come to the West Side, to which he would sometime return to do them good.

*The Cenci* was drawing great audiences in New York, and winning the encomiums of the critics. Mrs. Dearwester was spending the winter in the blissful contemplation of Olive's appearing in a piece which required, as she said, no prancing or sheep's eyes, but was something a woman could sing without lowering herself to the side-show level. Everything was as it should be, it seemed. And yet— Why this note from Olive, in which she begged Morgan to ask Tim Burns not to write any more letters to Emerson about labor matters? And this other from Mrs. Dearwester telling him for mercy's sake to do what he could to quiet Emerson down? He was reading all the Chicago papers, she said, and was writing letters to Jack Enright, and Connors of the Teamsters' Union, and all the time talking to Olive about the call for him in Chicago. Ah, well, Olive must learn, then, the fact that

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart;  
'Tis woman's whole existence!"

That, of course, being not the way a man would be likely to put it! Morgan could see how Emerson might feel, as the mere husband of Dearwester, her new fad, living on her earnings, trying to do something in the way of literary work, failing in it—and all the time, over here in this great industrial center of the continent, these greater things than opera or poems or written tragedies were being worked out,

and were calling for his labor to the end that righteousness be not lost sight of.

Burns told Morgan that most important issues were at stake. In Tim's own words, hell was to pay in labor circles. Connors, who had been elected to the presidency of the Teamsters' Union, was "wrong." There was a building trades' strike on a new elevator over by the river. Some one was running a corner in wheat, and this elevator was about to receive the actual grain which would burst the corner, and—anyhow, the building trades' strike was called because of crooked work instigated by the grain gamblers, to prevent the completion of the elevator. Connors, quite without any reason that Burns could see, and therefore, as Tim thought, through graft, was about to embroil the teamsters in it through a sympathetic strike, to prevent the builders from going back to work. This was the inside of it from a labor standpoint. The Barney Hagan gang, with whom Jack Enright was again identified, was now working with Connors. This in itself was suspicious.

The newspapers were full of wild stories, each contradictory of the others. Connors was making a fight for the approval of opinion in the unions, and the average man was befogged. There were big interests with Connors. There were great interests opposed to him. What better for the common teamster than to stand by the officers he had elected, and to believe in them as against soreheads, like Tim Burns, who were probably bought up by the men building the elevator?

So day after day wore on, and one plan of arbitration after another fell to the ground. All were

talking of the interests of the employers, or of the interests of the workmen, and only a few of the interests of the public. The great mass of the people seemed helpless to prevent a conflict, like that of civil war, the preparations for which went on in their midst. Yeager was one of a committee of conciliation, upon which he was placed because of his reputation as a champion of the rights of labor; but he found himself distrusted by both sides. He worked heroically through Burns and Petersen, at the time of the referendum vote on the question of striking, and was bitterly disappointed when Connors won, and the strike was called. Many a time he had wished for Emerson, but thought of Olive and kept silent.

The city awoke anxious that morning, for the people knew what a strike of the teamsters on their streets meant. Special policemen by the hundreds were sworn in. The governor's office sent out orders to the adjutant general, and militia officers were warned to hold their commands in readiness to quell rioting. It was like the preparation for a battle. We talk of the insurrections in the Latin-American countries: many a South American revolution has involved less disturbance than one of our great strikes.

Why did not the overwhelming mass of people who were not either teamsters or employers throw themselves between these marshaling armies, and command the peace? Why did they allow men who had ceased work to make life unsafe and civic order a byword, because other men came to take their places? What was there in the mere driving of a team on the streets that it should be looked upon as a privilege to be fought for, even while the person claiming it

refused to obey the commands of him for whom he worked? Was it not unthinkable, this struggle of men to control the jobs they had deserted? Yes, said Morgan, from the standpoint of the old fiction of the liberty of the citizen, it was unthinkable.

Then why was it, that the great mass of people sympathized in one way or another with the strikers whose behavior in trying to control the jobs they had deserted made life unsafe and order a byword? Why was it that as the platoons of police escorted through the streets of Chicago these teams driven by strike-breakers, so many missiles were hurled from far above in the top stories of the sky-scrapers, by men and women who were not teamsters nor members of the union? Had men gone insane, that they should sympathize with and commit crimes of disorder for those who tried to do so preposterous a thing as to control the jobs they refused to execute? All this, said Morgan, was because the old hypothesis of the liberty of the citizen has broken down, and the people in a blind sort of way know it. These teamsters were not free. They could not go out and work for themselves, as the law says they may do. They must work in the jobs they had, or go into the infernal regions of the unemployed. We have allowed the opportunities of self-employment to be fenced up and monopolized, and reduced to private ownership, until the liberty of the citizen, if he has only his labor to sell, is gone, and his job is like a last plank between him and drowning. Any other floating struggler has as good a right to the plank as he: but the plank will buoy up but one, and the sea is so cold and deep! The people who hurled missiles from the top stories felt this

unrecognized truth of the smallness of the plank, and the depth and cruelty of the sea, and their hearts went out to the men who were fighting for their jobs on living terms. What if Connors had been bribed? Who knew it anyhow?

The interests that desired, in the ferocious give-and-take of modern money-making, to prevent the completion of the elevator, had schemed and plotted so that the lumber coming up from the lake in boats, had gone astray or been tied up; and the builders had resorted to teaming for the delivery of their materials. Hence, the teamsters' sympathetic strike was created, to bolster up the waning resistance of the building trades. So it was that like a reinforcement thrown into a beleaguered city, a train-load of strike-breakers detrained at the La Salle Street station one day, and were hustled into all sorts of vehicles, and carried to quarters where they were kept in reserve for the next day's battle. They were poor drifting fellows, men out of work, mostly ignorant, and deceived by employment agencies from which they had received glowing accounts of the high wages for teamsters prevailing in Chicago, and assurances that there were no troubles with the unions; and now they shrank back into the omnibuses and carriages, dodging nervously as stones or bricks flew past the windows. But as to them there was no fiction, even, of liberty. They were "enlisted," and the authorities had too much to do with their own citizens, to pay attention, had they known of it, to the fact that a crowd of strike-breakers was restrained of their liberty at such and such a place.

Everywhere was bustle, and hurry and apprehen-



sion. Mostly, the affairs of the great city seemed to go as usual. To a stranger, the chief outward symptom of the strike was the crying of extras by newsboys, and the conversation in hotel lobbies or cars as to the stand the governor would take, or what the mayor would do. It was rather odd that in public places no one expressed any opinion as to the merits of the affair. Only in the clubs and at the churches was the atmosphere sufficiently clear of opposition to admit freely of the expressions of condemnation of the strikers and their methods which the law justified.

Here and there would be seen a knot of men surrounding an overturned dray, and perhaps a beaten and bloody strike-breaker or picketer was carried away in the ambulance, and the platoon of police would come rushing through the crowd, and push and hustle the bystanders until a way was opened, and the dray would be sent on its way, or its load, if the vehicle happened to be disabled, could be transferred to another. Thus two days passed, and the guerrilla warfare continued. The commerce of the city was crippled by the spreading of the boycott of the teamsters to one business house after another. The papers called upon the president to send the Federal troops. The mayor declared that order was not being disturbed beyond his power to remedy. The president referred the matter to the governor. The governor came to the city, told the mayor that in his opinion the police were too indulgent to the strikers, and ordered out the militia. Thus statesmanship accomplished that triumph by which it permitted Monopoly to throw out the subsistence of the laborer as a prize to be fought for, and then put soldiers into the field to

force them to fight in an orderly manner. It is a very reasonable thing. In the Black Hole of Calcutta, people trampled one another to death that they might get to the one window through which air entered the Hole. They should have had modern statesmanship such as we use in strike disturbances, so that those who had the bad taste to be suffocating might have been awed into such self-control as would permit of a struggle for air without breach of the peace. Men's jobs are just as precious to them under present conditions, as the air they breathe. Modern industrial organization is a Black Hole into which the vital necessity of the chance to work is admitted by the one narrowing window of Monopoly. The window is never injured in the struggle of scabs and union men to get their mouths to the life-giving air. But, when the strugglers get riotous, we can order out the militia. Wise statesmanship indeed! So thought Morgan, as he passed through the human sea of Chicago, under the waves of which went on these battles, here and there, which sent the shocks of their civic agony through the whole community, and yet were unseen by the average citizen, who went on buying and selling as usual.

"Now, Yeager," said the managing editor of the *Observer*, "I've sent for you because we want your view of the militia phase of this thing. We want you to go back to ordinary reporting—with the political economist's guff in addition. Do you get my meaning?"

"Perfectly," said Morgan. "I can find time to do it, I think. All efforts to stop the thing seem to be given up. What do you want me to do?"

"Take a look at that," said the managing editor, handing Morgan a piece of copy.

"The Two Hundred and Ninety-seventh Regiment I. N. G. has been ordered to report at Battery Z at once," said the item. "In the absence of Colonel Everett, the regiment will be under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Bloodgood, who has returned from the European spas quite restored to health. Colonel Bloodgood is known as a man of great force of character and resolution, and will do whatever he is ordered to do, and in all walks of life has been ready to take responsibility. The regiment, mustering about six hundred men, and a battery of artillery with a gatling, will be under arms at Battery Z by six to-night."

"Now," went on the managing editor, "I want you first of all to interview this man Bloodgood and make one of your picturesque studies of his character in the light of his social and business connections—"

"Quite impossible," responded Morgan, "and unnecessary. I once had the pleasure of knocking him down. He wouldn't see me. But I know all about his character, and his business and social connections. I can't write that part of it, though, and do the paper justice. You'd want it written by some one who is impartial."

"M—well," said the editor, "knowledge is the prime requisite. Write it up as interestingly as you can. There is to be a demonstration on one of the cross-town streets to-morrow morning—Jackson Boulevard or Adams, or maybe Van Buren Street, and an effort to move loaded teams to the river under police escort. There is likely to be a riot somewhere along the line;

and Bloodgood's regiment is to jump in and sweep the street if there is any excuse for it. Of course, this won't restore order. It will make the disorder worse; but the big business of the city will welcome such disorder as will furnish a pretext for putting the town under martial law, and stamping out unionism and the closed shop with the military. Of course, the relations of Bloodgood with the System will give an interesting side-light on the matter. Remember Flower's articles in which he pictured the armories as 'Bastilles of the Plutocracy'? Well, we're going to run a panel with some quotations from it, and we want a pen-picture of Battery Z from you. I guess that's all now, Yeager. Get it in as early as you can, you know."

Yeager went down to take the car to Battery Z, his pulse beating faster with the agitation he felt at the contemplation of the terrible situation. Down on the Board of Trade men were struggling and fighting in the wheat-corner battle. Over on the river was the great elevator, the building of which had become one of the moves in the game: a great towering amorphous fabric, on which a few men were making an ineffectual show of work. In the parlor of a shabby hotel a group of leaders of the building trades was struggling with the question of why they should not call off the elevator strike, and restore peace; asking one another if it could be true that it was wheat-corner graft which had called them out in the first place, and if they could now honorably retreat and leave their brothers, the teamsters, in the lurch. Over in Teamsters' Hall, Connors was holding the fort with stirring appeals to the sense of brotherhood, and the

necessity of union labor standing firm for the principle that "the injury of one is the concern of all." Telegrams were flashing back and forth to Washington, to Springfield, from both cities to Chicago, official and unofficial. At the City Hall the mayor was in consultation with the chief of police, and at the various stations special policemen were being sworn in. Here and there were the overturned drays, the bloody skirmishes, and the throwing of missiles. In well-guarded barracks were the poor frightened strike-breakers, to whom were being issued revolvers that they might defend themselves against those who were trying to get their mouths to the window of Monopoly, or keep them there, so as not to meet industrial suffocation for lack of work. And up at Battery Z were the khaki-clad clerks and tradesmen ready to go out and obey the commands of John Bloodgood, whatever they might be, to the end that the struggle for the work which Monopoly vouchsafed might be carried on in orderly manner. And the grim little gatling peered toward the exit like a living thing which scented prey.

"What a nightmare!" he repeated to himself as he passed along. "What a nightmare! A horrible tug of war in which both sides lose, and the real weight to be moved, an intelligent, calculating entity which sits and watches them cancel each other's strength. Here it's labor against labor, and there labor against capital; when it should be everywhere labor and capital against monopoly—the dead hand that grasps all and gives nothing. When shall we grow wise enough to see it?"

He bethought himself of an engagement to meet

Tim Burns at a certain corner, and went over and picked him up. They walked along together, canvassing the situation and collating the facts to that time.

"If we could git Enright," said Tim, "we could control the teamsters. Everybody's ready f'r arbitration—everybody that's on the square; but things is likely to take a turn anny time that'll put us up agin' the proposition of winnin' all 'r losin' all—an' maybe martial law an' a permit office like what they had out west. If we could on'y control Enright; but there's on'y wan man in the world that's got license to try—an' you know who that is."

"Yes," said Morgan regretfully, "and he's in New York, and can't be got."

They passed Williard Hall, and saw on the bulletin-board an announcement that the distinguished western pulpit orator, Doctor Bovee, would speak that day on the Gospel Remedy for Present Evils.

"They've all got a cure," observed Tim. "An' mostly the cure is f'r the workin'-man to hold his breath till the employin' classes git converted."

"Let's go in and see," said Morgan. "It's the time for the noon meeting now; and I know something about Doctor Bovee."

The doctor, rubicund, bald, and well-fed, was filling the great auditorium with jeremiads of the sort now called for from the pope of the denomination which had so long ago violated all precedents by electing that untried young man, Emerson Courtright, to the pastorate of the First Church of Lattimore without taking Doctor Bovee's advice in the premises, and had been well punished for so doing.

The strike, he said, was the most flagrant of violations of the precepts of Jesus, unless put into effect in a manner unknown to modern life. The field of employment was almost unlimited in this country, and no man need be without work unless he chose. For laboring men to conspire to strike was in itself a violation of the Golden Rule, since no man would choose, were he an employer, to have such a thing done to him. *Servants, obey your masters* was the advice of an inspired writer, and like all inspired utterances had deep practical significance. In this case, modern industry could not go on increasing in efficiency, and thus rendering possible such great financial aids to God's work as we were now receiving from the masters of industry and finance, unless those whom Providence had made laborers were persuaded to accept the truths of the gospel, including that obedience to their superiors which the text from Saint Paul and the Golden Rule both require. And as for this unchristian and turbulent attitude on the part of organized labor toward men who came to take the place of strikers, it could not be too strongly reprehended. The non-union man had as good a right to work as the union man. The strike-breaker was often a hero, a soldier of the right, in a holy war for the divine right freely to labor, and therefore serve his fellow-man. This was an issue—

"I've heerd enough o' this," said Tim. "Let's git out."

"Well," asked Morgan, "what answer can you make to that argument, Tim?"

"It sounds all right," replied Tim. "That's what makes me so hot—it sounds right, but it ain't right."

I dunno where the hole in the skimmer is; but it's there. I wonder if he's so danged anxious f'r the non-union workers' rights when they's no strike on?"

"Is it right," queried Morgan, "to keep men from taking your places?"

"It's necessary," answered Tim. "Wages would sink to nothing a day and find yourself, if we didn't."

"If you could get a job as easy as he says, or could go out and work for yourself, as men used to do when the country was new—"

"I'd chuck the union, to-morrow," said Tim. "This strike makes me sick of the union. We don't seem to have sense enough to find leaders more than once in a dozen times, that are on the square. They claim they do it in some countries, but we don't do it here. But we just have to keep on. These white-choker people don't see it from our standpoint. We just have to keep on."

"Is the labor union any nearer right in these matters than the churches, do you think?"

"Maybe not," said Tim. "But it's gettin' nearer right all the time. The churches are has-beens from the laboring man's outlook. The unions are comers. What's the cry when the pickets git near enough to holler at the strike-breakers? 'Shame,' they holler, 'to take your brother's job!' They holler it here in this strike that never ought to've been called. They holler it with bricks in their hands. An' it does more to pull the scabs off the wagons than the bricks do. The unions are moving toward brotherhood, an' the churches away from it, as Mr. Courtright used to say—I wish to God he was here!"

Up at Battery Z Morgan found that distinctive



atmosphere of waiting which goes with preparation. He saw John Bloodgood come up in his motor-car, and, his gaunt figure clothed in khaki, alight, and walk resolutely into the armory past the saluting sentries. Yeager superintended the taking of photographs of the building for the *Observer*, and made notes for his description.

"And, by the way, Yeager," said the staff photographer, "Jones sent this telegram. I pretty near forgot to give it to you."

It was addressed to him in care of the *Observer*, and was from Olive.

Take care of Emerson. For God's sake, don't let him run into danger. As you would protect me if you were called upon, protect him. He would come: I could not restrain him. I shall come, too. Keep him safe until I arrive, Morgan, for my sake!

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### DOWN IN THE MAELSTROM

"Take care of Emerson!" read Olive's telegram. "Protect him as you would protect me!"

Mr. Yeager, writing that afternoon at his desk in the *Observer* building, somewhat gravely smiled from time to time at the thought of Olive's appeal—as if her husband had been a child, and likely to play on the street-car tracks. Yet, from time to time also, he looked out of his high window at groups in the street which might mean affrays and strike riots, and felt a sense of uneasiness as hour after hour slipped by and brought him no visit from Emerson. Surely Olive's telegram meant that he had come to Chicago: and it would be strange if he should fail to call upon Morgan for his first information as to the labor troubles.

And yet it was quite natural that Emerson, reading feverishly the Chicago papers as he flew westward, should have had his program so mapped out on arrival that he hurried directly to the place where his efforts to bring peace out of the seething war would have the best prospect of success. More than ever was he impelled to this course, by the tidings which he gleaned from a paper, bought after entering the city limits, that there was to be a movement in force to resume traffic the next morning—and that the militia had been ordered out. In another column he saw

the announcement that the building trades had called off their strike on the elevator, thus stripping the teamsters of their justification, since there was no longer a struggle with which their sympathetic strike could sympathize: and yet Connors, in an interview, took the position that the contest now involved the rights of his organization, and could not be abandoned at any point short of victory. It was clear from passages in Burns' letters that the teamsters were restively suspicious of the fact that Connors had called them out corruptly, as a part of the great game of the wheat corner; and that if he could only draw away any considerable number of his supporters, Connors must succumb. Emerson's mind always turned at this point to Enright, and to the influence over Jack which had come to him by his treatment of his fallen foe after their meeting in Teamsters' Hall. He would find Jack; and if such a thing were possible, he would win him and his "gang" from Connors to the cause of peace. He would prevent that struggle in the streets. He would put the unions in the right, whereas now they were in the wrong. He would bring peace to Chicago. Maybe he would save human lives. Anyhow, he would try—try with all his might—to the end that the brute force of military rule might be avoided, and that the poor, blind workers be kept from one of those sickening blunders which mark their slow struggle upward toward brotherhood. Therefore, he must hurry. He must leave his luggage in the parcel room at the station, and take a car straight to the West Side.

At Conway's saloon Jack had not been seen since the evening before, when he was drunk and quarrel-

some. Doyle, a gambler, took Emerson aside and told him that Jack was hitting it up pretty strong lately, and was in a nasty frame of mind; but if he really wanted to find him, he might learn of his whereabouts at the chop suey joint down Blue Island Avenue. On the way, Emerson met Burns and Petersen, and took them with him that he might explain his plans.

"I hope to God," said Burns, "that we can find him. You orto been here a week ago."

At the chop suey joint it was found at first that they did not know Jack; then that he had not been there for weeks; then, on consideration of the fact that it was Strangler Courtright who wanted to see him, and the identification of Emerson by a rouged young lady sitting in a stall, it was admitted that he was there the evening before with Connors and some other men.

"Ay tank," suggested Petersen, "dat hae bane with Yim Connors now."

"You go, Petersen," said Emerson, "and watch the door of Teamsters' Hall from the restaurant opposite. I'll call up over the telephone every fifteen minutes. You go down to Conway's, Tim, and report to Petersen if you get any trace of Jack. He has a friend down on Des Plaines Street, in the Sarsfield Buffet—I'll go down there, and one or two other places."

"Tell Pete where you're bound," said Tim, "when you go anny place you didn't mention. Them's tough places; an' grow tougher the later it gits."

The night had now shut down, and hope grew weaker with the darkness. Courtright walked swiftly from place to place, as he thought of the grim preparations up there in Battery Z, and the special officers

taking the oath at the stations and receiving their stars; of the poor fellows imported as strike-breakers, and of the mob which would throng the streets filled with hate of them, and armed with all the appliances of the slugger and bruiser; of the brandished clubs of the police squad, and the quick-marching khaki-column—all helpless pawns shoved into place by other helpless pawns in the blind struggle of modern industry. And he hurried more swiftly.

At the Sarsfield Buffet no one had seen Jack Enright for days. Emerson moved about among the habitués of the place, looking for familiar faces, but found no one of whom he might inquire, save the corpulent proprietor, who was a relative of Enright. The reports from Tim and Petersen brought no light to the problem. None of the policemen on the street had seen him, except one who corroborated the chop suey story of his having been seen with Jimmy Connors and the ringleaders of the teamsters' strike the day before. The officer suggested that Tim Burns and Petersen had been seen on the street, and ought to know something of Jack. Thus the quest went about in a circle. Emerson moved away from this policeman, in the uncertain way of one who knows not where to go next. A queer little hunch-backed figure scuttled along by his side. Emerson looked down at her curiously, and stopped, as he felt a detaining tug on his coat.

"Are you the Strangler?" was the question.

It was the figure of a child—a deformed child; but the voice was that of a woman.

"Yes," was his answer. "But I don't know you."

"I didn't know yeh in dese togs," said she. "Yo

must 'a' cracked a crib. No, you ain't dat kind; but you're all right, all de same. You want to find Black Jack?"

"Yes," said he quickly. "Do you know where he is?"

"Naw," said the little creature. "But if you'll go to a place I say, an' ask f'r Mayme, she'll know, dead sure. Mayme's me sister."

The night was wearing on, and the streets were deserted, save for those whose acquaintance it was better to shun, or searchers like Emerson. As the wanderers grew fewer, they became more and more suspicious of one another, and listened after one another's retreating footsteps, and walked warily past alleys and dark doorways. Yet Emerson knew that over on the South Side, though it must take him long to reach the place, he should find those who in garish misery of mock-joy turned even this dead of night into a fearful sort of day. He reported to Petersen, who at the closing of Conway's place had been joined by Tim, that he had a clue, and told them what it was. There was no further need for them to stay where they were, and it was arranged for them to go to an all-night place in the Loop, and await messages from Emerson. One of them would drift about down-town in the hope of encountering their man by chance, while the other stayed near the telephone.

Down into the City of Dreadful Night went Emerson, alone on his night-long quest. Yes, he could see Mayme—and she came into the room with a frozen smile, which turned into anxiety as she saw from his face that he had something of import to say to her.

"What is it?" said she, her hand upon her breast. "Has anything happened to Jack? Has he been took bad ag'in?"

"I don't know," said he. "I am searching for him. I want you to tell me where he is."

She looked long and piercingly at him.

"You're no fly cop," said she. "And you look good. But what do you want Jack for? Has he done anything?"

"I don't want him for anything he's done," replied Emerson. "I don't belong to the police force, and I have no connection with it. I want to see Jack about this strike. Did you ever hear him speak of a man named Courtright?"

"Are you the Strangler?" she cried. "You're the only man that ever got the best o' Jack Enright. I told him he ought t' kill you, but he thought more o' you than he did o' me. I see now how you made such a fool o' him. You could do the same with me, or any one, honey. Well, Jack told me when he was here, that he'd be at a strike meeting at the Gurley House some time after midnight. So I reckon he'll be there if you hurry. He an' a man by the name o' Jimmy will be there together. You're the on'y man I know of that I'd send there, unless I wanted him throwed out. Don't mention it; you're welcome, I'm sure."

The long stairway of the elevated railway station was carpeted with new-fallen snow, as Emerson climbed it to take the tardy train back down-town. A company of roisterers in evening clothes waited with him in noisy impatience. They were discussing in their maudlin way the strike, and the delays in getting

about, and the ballet of the vaudeville which they had visited, and, finally, the strike again. They seemed to be men of the sort that have or plume themselves upon having acquaintances in all places where glares the light of prominence. One was telling what the mayor had said to him that day. Another was in the office of Searles and Van Dorn, and described the process of getting out the labor injunctions.

"But," said a third, a red-mustached, red-faced, red-cravatted, undersized man with a fur-lined top-coat, "what is needed is a whiff or two of powder. Damn their souls, why do the authorities trifle with these fellows? I told Colonel Bloodgood so at the club to-day; and he nodded in a way that makes me think there'll be something doing in the way of the ambulance corps, if the regiment is moved to-morrow morning. Ever meet Bloodgood? They say he went batty on an actress last year, and is doing the never-smiled-again stunt. But he'll shoot, and shoot to kill."

Bloodgood! This was the first intimation Court-right had heard that John Bloodgood was in command of the militia. As Emerson went down-town he turned this over in his mind, wondering whether Bloodgood's knowledge of him and his truthfulness would not prove a way out of the danger. The time was slipping away. Already the east was growing gray even through the falling snow, and the period in which to bring Enright over to the side of peace, and force Connors into submission, was all too short. He sat down in the lobby of the hotel where Burns and Petersen were awaiting him, and penciled a note to Bloodgood. He believed, he wrote, that



Colonel Bloodgood must be as desirous as he of preventing any conflict between the sympathizers with the strike and the military. He happened to be known to some of the leaders of the teamsters, and had come on from New York to use his influence in the direction of calling off the strike, or suspending it, and was now on his way to a conference at which he hoped to accomplish this end. There was, as Colonel Bloodgood knew, every prospect of a renewal of the rioting in a very few hours, and he, Courtright, was pressed for time. Hence, if he succeeded in his efforts, he would not be able to do so in time to bring the parties together and make the facts public before the beginning of the police demonstration in moving teams on the streets. He hoped to be able to induce Mr. Connors, of the Teamsters' Union, to go with him down the line and announce a settlement. He therefore begged Colonel Bloodgood to communicate the contents of this letter to the mayor at once, and in case his command should be called upon to quell rioting, to withhold as long as possible any action which would be likely to result in loss of life, or to widen the breach between the classes.

"I know, John," said he in closing, "that you have small cause, as you think, to look upon me as a friend; and I believe you regard me as an enemy. But this can not cancel your knowledge that I am truthful. I assure you that I have great reason to believe in my ability to settle this disturbance. Should I succeed in doing so, I will see that the press has the news at once, and will go to the center of the disturbance with the report. My appearance there will be evi-

dence that the strike is settled, and you may so regard it."

"And now," said he, as the messenger went away with the letter, "I'm going up to the Gurley House."

"We'll go with you," said Tim.

"As far as the lobby," answered Emerson. "I'll go up alone and get Jack. If I can get him away from Connors, the day is won; and I can do that best alone."

The night clerk at the Gurley House, that musty, frowsy old hostelry, was just rubbing the night's heaviness out of his eyes and making his early morning summonses to those guests who had left calls for them, when the three—Tim and Petersen in their workmen's suits, and Courtright in his rumpled traveling dress—walked in and asked where the Teamsters' conference was. He had orders not to send any one up, said the clerk.

"Well, then," said Emerson, "I'll go up alone, if you'll send a boy with me."

The tone of assurance was such that the clerk touched his bell, and a boy preceded Emerson up the stairway to a parlor, where a man who stood at the door sought to question them.

"I have business here," said Emerson; and pushing the man aside resolutely, he walked in.

Half a dozen men sat about the table. Emerson knew them as the managers of the strike, the leaders on whose vote the issue depended. Their grouping, three to three across the board, showed him as plainly as words could have described it, the deadlock in their deliberations. At Connors' side, his face paler than

ever before, his eyes wilder, and his expression more reckless, sat Black Jack Enright.

"What the hell," growled Connors, "does this mean?"

"I want a word with you, Jack," said Emerson gently.

Enright looked up, and as his eyes met Courtright's they wavered, and dropped to the table before him.

"I'm busy," said he. "I can't come for an hour."

"This is a private conference, Mr. Courtright," said Connors; "please withdraw."

"I shall have to see you now, Jack," said Emerson, with his eyes still fixed on Enright. "Now. Come down into the lobby with me. Come!"

Enright rose slowly, like a man under hypnotic control.

"Come on, old man!" repeated Emerson, approaching Enright with outstretched hand.

"Not by a damned sight!" exclaimed Connors. "Jack don't go! He's needed here. Jack, you know what you told me. Are you a man or a mouse? This smooth-coated buck whipped you once; does Jack Enright stay whipped? Come, help throw this butter-in out, and redeem yourself!"

"Emerson is a friend of mine," replied Enright. "Don't talk like that, Jim. It ain't right. You'll have to excuse me for a while, Emerson. We've got some things coming up here that will keep me."

"Sure they will," added Connors; "an' we've got no time to monkey with you, neither."

"No, Jack," repeated Emerson, "I can't excuse you. What I've got to say is more important than anything here. You know it is or I wouldn't say so.

It won't take you long. I'll let you come back whenever you say so—"

"He'll let you!" sneered Connors. "Hear the dude promise Jack Enright he'll let him come back! Hear him talk as if—"

"You call him a dude!" said Enright, his face stuck out toward Connors, and gradually nearing it. "Why, why, you—he could twist you between his thumb an' finger an' throw you under the table. He's worth a Chicago of Jimmy Connorses. He wants me to go with him. He never asked me t' do anything that wan't f'r my own good. I can git t'rough with him an' come back here in less time than it takes to talk about it, f'r he's always straight to the point, an' no double cross. I'm goin' where he wants me t' go, see? An' the proceedin's here stop till I git back, see?"

"W'y, sure, Jack, sure!" said Connors. "Only don't stay too long. I didn't mean no harm, you know."

Courtright laid his arm about the ruffian's waist and walked with him down the stairs, where Petersen and Tim Burns awaited them. Enright frowned, as he saw the teamsters.

"I've got no business with these men!" he exclaimed. "I'm on the other side, an' I stay where you put me in a fight."

"Suppose," said Emerson, "that you're put out as a Punch in a puppet show, worked by some one else's fingers? And suppose the thing isn't right, Jack? Would you—"

"What do I care whether it's right 'r wrong?" cried Jack. "There's heads t' be broke, an' blows t' be struck; an' there's the damned capitalists to be hurt.

An' there's a little in it f'r me. I tell you, Emerson, there ain't no right nor wrong left f'r me—"

"Yes, there is, Jack. There's at least the matter of treating me right, isn't there?"

"You know where I stand on that," answered Jack. "Well, go ahead. What do you want? You tell me on the square an' I'll do it if I can."

"I want you to listen to what these men say, Jack; and then I want you to go back and do the right thing. And then I want you to make Connors do the right thing. You haven't had the rights of this shown to you yet, or you wouldn't have done as you did. It isn't a question between Burns and Petersen, here, and Connors and Williams. It isn't any such question as you seem to think it is. It's a question of whether you, Jack Enright, are willing to have men shot down in the streets this morning—within two hours, perhaps—to help a capitalists' scheme you have never heard of; and are willing to help Jimmy Connors do something that he daren't tell even Jack Enright of, but has to cover up under a lot of lies by which he holds you to his work, while keeping the rewards of it himself. Now, Tim, tell Jack about this elevator business, from first to last."

Slowly, stumblingly, and with subtle additions from Courtright, Burns began and carried forward his story. Emerson stood by Jack's side, with a hand on his shoulder, or an arm about his waist. It was a struggle for mastery of Enright's soul, as that other contest had been for the subjection of his body. Time after time, the old cruelty and hardness returned, and Emerson thought he had lost; but again and again, he played his capture, and brought him under ruler-

ship. Emerson stood smiling and debonair; while Tim felt the sweat gather on his own brow, as the curious struggle went on.

Connors knew that some great change had come, as Jack's face gloomed palely in at the door after their long wait, and Courtright's, scarcely less pale, appeared behind him.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### THE VINDICATION OF THE LAW

Long before night, Morgan Yeager had ceased to smile even gravely, at the thought of Olive's wifely, maternal plea that he protect her husband against some danger which her instinct feared, while Morgan's mind saw nothing ominous. In the first place, Courtright had not appeared or reported to him. In the second, Burns had not been home, and he and Mollie had made up their minds that the missing ones were out together. Thirdly, it was reported at one or two places on the street, that Courtright, Burns and Petersen had been seen together, and that they were looking for Jack Enright and Connors, thus carrying the clue into the heart of the strike trouble. Lastly, he had another telegram from Olive, to meet her at the Twelfth Street station at the incoming of an early morning train from New York; and he was sorry to appear before her with neither her husband in the flesh, nor any news of his safety—of which, however, he kept repeating to himself, it was childish and womanish to entertain any doubt.

He stood beside the porter as she alighted with her maids and Emerson's valet from the Pullman. The man began quietly getting together their luggage, and giving orders for their going to the old apartments, while Olive, her face pale, her eyes gloom-

ing with the shadows of anxiety and sleeplessness, seized his hands, and asked where Emerson was.

"I haven't seen him," was Morgan's reply. "But I know he got here safe. He was on the West Side last night, looking for—for some people. He was with Tim. There's no need for any such worry, Olive."

"He's trying to settle the strike," said Olive, "isn't he?"

"I think so," answered Morgan.

"Isn't there danger in that?"

"Why," replied Morgan, "I've been trying to do that myself; and so have a number of people. We haven't thought it dangerous. You needn't worry, Olive, it isn't really dangerous."

"But it is," said she, "it is! You don't go down into the den of the beasts, as he does. For whom was he looking, Morgan?"

"For a man named Enright, one of the Teamsters' Union."

"Come, come!" she exclaimed. "Let us find him! They won't hurt him if I am with him. No one would hurt him if they knew how much—oh, Morgan, I begged him not to come. And he asked me if I wanted him always to have to think of duty evaded and a task refused. And I said he might come: I said he might. And he had to start while the performance was on, and couldn't come to me because he was afraid it would spoil my singing; and he left a letter that frightens me—you can't tell how it frightens me! He seemed to feel that he—he might never see me again, and told me things he wanted me to do—if he—if anything happened. That man Enright



is a wild beast, Morgan. Why are we standing here, when we should be looking for him!"

Trying to explain to her that their looking for him was a hopeless task, but more and more conquered by her need for action, Morgan sent her maids and man on to the hotel, and taking the motor hansom in which he had come, he told the chauffeur to go down Michigan Boulevard.

"Avoid any gatherings you may see," said he, "and keep on the lake front. There's likely to be trouble on Van Buren, or Jackson Boulevard, anywhere west of Wabash Avenue."

Somewhere south of Congress Street, the chauffeur slowed down.

"There seems to be quite a crowd in Michigan Avenue, sir," said he, "and the police seem to be halting vehicles down there. Perhaps we'd better take a shoot over on Wabash or State or Clark, wherever the way seems clear, sir."

"Very well," said Morgan.

He was explaining to Olive that the effort to move traffic on the streets by teams was really nothing more than what had been done repeatedly in the past week, and that the talk of the militia was nothing more, he thought, than a threat: and, in any case, Emerson's efforts to bring the struggle to a close could not bring him into the mob, or into danger from the disturbance; when he noticed that the hansom was moving more and more slowly along a cross-town street, which to the west of them seemed literally packed with people, from whom came that droning hum that betokens excitement. There were men, women and children, of all classes; but the common clothes of

most of them gave character to the scene. All the upper windows of the great buildings appeared to be thrown wide open, and the faces of those looking out of them were turned toward the east as if in expectation of the passage of some pageant. The chauffeur appeared troubled, and taking advantage of a less densely crowded spot in the street, he turned about, and made an endeavor to force his way into the north-and-south street, either State Street, or Dearborn—when, suddenly, as if by magic, the whole thoroughfare, from curb to curb, and for hundreds of feet on all sides, filled with the humming mob, and with its left-hand wheel to the sidewalk, the hansom stopped, literally swamped in a sea of human beings.

Olive grew paler, and looked questioningly into Morgan's face.

"Well," said he, "we should congratulate ourselves. We are in the midst of the mob, and right in the line of march. Let me get you through the crowd into the store."

"No, no!" said she. "Not yet, at least. Can you look over and see what they are doing?"

The crowd about them good-naturedly chaffed the swells in the hansom, until they noted the troubled face of the woman, and then, in a spirit of helpfulness, they began to try to make way for the vehicle to proceed. One young man who looked like a salesman was especially active in this, and after he had failed, he removed his hat and spoke.

"There isn't the slightest possibility of getting you out, Miss Dearwester," said he, "but I can get you into the store, here, if you are frightened."

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" said she, giving him a look which haunted his dreams for a long, long time. "After a little while, perhaps, but not now!"

Morgan was standing, and looking over the heads of the crowd. About them, the people seemed to a great extent mere spectators, like most mobs. He could see none whose appearance marked them as strikers. There were street gamins, the riffraff of down-town saloons, many strangers from the hotels, shoppers, clerks, porters, street-cleaners, newsboys, bootblacks, barbers in their working suits, cooks, bakers, teamsters—in fact, all the motley array of callings and nationalities of a Chicago crowd. Mostly they were good-naturedly curious, and had come to see the strike riots as to a spectacle. That any large proportion of them were strikers seemed to Morgan entirely improbable.

On the outskirts of the crowd, and at little centers of disturbance in its midst, he could see the tall forms of red-faced policemen flourishing their clubs, and ordering the people to move on and disperse—and the crowd flowed in behind and around them as water ripples about a moving oar. But down, a few score yards nearer the lake, he could see a mightier disturbance, like that made by some incoming boat. Waves of compression in the human sea, starting from this center, moved outward from time to time, until they broke about the hansom, in trodden toes and storms of squeezed-out objurgations. In the center of the commotion was a nucleus of one or two drays on which rode policemen with clubs in their hands, and about them were squads of officers whose batons rose and fell with an approach to regularity, as their

bearers roared out commands to the crowd to disperse—that crowd which, in the immediate vicinity of the police, was all too willing to do so, but which was wedged in place by packed acres of the throng.

Habituated to crowds, Olive was not frightened by the presence of these thousands, who might from the looks of them have been gathered in generous enthusiasm for some triumph of her own. The American labor mob is not grim and wild and glaring, but carries our ever-present and sometimes pestiferous sense of humor, even to the gatling's mouth. She was not disquieted even by those waves of stress which recoiled from the oncoming of the moving drays. Suddenly, however, she heard a chorus from somewhere near, the tone of which struck terror to her heart. It was the battle-cry of the helpless pawns thrown against one another in the new warfare which Monopoly creates, by making jobs as precious as the air they breathe to the landless and unprivileged. It was raucous, and full of hate. It was the cry of desperation. It was ominous as a wolf-howl to one lost in a northern waste.

"Scab! Scab!" was the howl. "Kill the scab! Kill the scab!"

The roar of the commands of the police rose louder to this challenge, and the drays moved nearer, the pale strike-breakers sitting with the useless reins in their hands, their lips drawn up in the snarl of trapped beasts, the great peaceful horses stepping slowly as if in patient indulgence toward the inexplicable caprices of these strange beings—men. The strike-breakers had no answering slogan. They had only the hunger for jobs, and their revolvers.

Olive sat quiet, as Morgan stood overlooking the scene, filled with the impression of its enormous portentousness, its fearful significance of the sharp agony of this generation which feels the first pang of the consciousness of lost opportunity for self-employment. A flight of dark objects, like down-sweeping sparrows, shot over the crowd, and fell on the drays and among the policemen.

"They are beginning to throw stones," said Morgan. "Let me get you out of this, Olive."

She rose, as if to accept his suggestion, when suddenly the crowd flowed into the space between them and the shop, as if forced by some piston-like mechanism operating from the north, taking the column of drays and police in the flank. Firmly as a frozen-in ship, the compressed mass held them, and people were so fiercely forced against the hansom as actually to sway it from side to side as the pressure of the crush varied.

"The troops! The troops!" was the shout; and looking along the down-town street, Morgan saw the khaki-clad column of soldiers moving with quick step toward them, their bayonets fixed, their eyes resolutely gazing in front of them, the crowd melting away before their mechanical advance—the snow of the mob before the red-hot iron of discipline. At their head, mounted on a tall horse, rode John Bloodgood. He was calm and impassive, sitting his mount as if on a walk in the park. His face, gaunter than ever, gave one the impression that his teeth were set in the tension of some suppressed fury, so hard were the angles of his jaw, so thin the line of his lips, so cruel the dull glow of his eyes. Morgan looked down at Olive.

"Don't be afraid of the troops," said he. "There is no danger."

"Oh!" she half whispered. "I'm so glad they have come!"

Then—she saw *him*. The double line of soldiers had moved up to the north line of the cross-town street, and brought the man on horseback into her field of vision.

"What is that man here for!" she exclaimed, her face wild with terror. "Where is Emerson, Morgan? Let me go to him!"

Morgan placed his hand on her shoulder, and held her from rising. Bloodgood rode on, seeing only that part of the mob whence had come the shower of missiles, and all-unconscious of her presence. The column of police had halted, to allow the militia time to clear the street. The crowd fled inexplicably, in all directions, and left standing comparatively alone the hundred or more across the street in the path of the advancing militia. The angle of the two highways was left free as if for the performance of some drama.

The group hesitated, as if in doubt, and then there broke through them five men, four in working-men's clothes, and one, the leader, in costly traveling dress, rumpled and stained by mud and slush. He was tall and strong, and his brown hair waved over a high white brow, as he removed his hat as if to show his face, and walked out from his fellows. Morgan and Olive both knew him at the same time; but he was oblivious of all onlookers except that advancing line of khaki. With that gesture which over all the world is the sign of peace—the raised hand with the palm forward—he advanced and stood, a beautiful and

commanding figure, as if pronouncing some benediction—as he was.

“Oh, it is he!” exclaimed Olive. “He has good news!”

“He has done it!” said Morgan, as he noted Emerson’s attitude, and knew that it spoke of peace. “He has done it! He has settled the strike! Why don’t they stop? Why don’t they notice him!”

Fifty yards, perhaps, lay between the strikers and the soldiers, when the wavy-haired man first stepped forward with the uplifted hand, and the benediction in his mien. The khaki line advanced unwaveringly, unslackeningly. The crowd had begun to flow back along the line of march. Some cries arose from it as the troop went through—cries of wrath and vile epithets hurled at the soldiers. They looked neither to the right nor to the left, but marched on. From somewhere to the right a half brick was thrown, striking the pavement just in front of the colonel’s horse; and from far up in a tall building, a crockery spittoon came crashing down between the lines, flying into a million splinters, but harming no one.

“Halt!” was the command.

“Thank God!” breathed Olive fervently, as the line halted. “They have seen him!”

And then as in some dreadful vision, they heard another word of command from the lips of the terrible figure on the horse, and with machine-like precision, the gleaming rifles came to the shoulders of the men. The figure with the outstretched, peace-proclaiming hand dropped the hat, and throwing up both arms, started forward alone, walking unhesitatingly toward the muzzles of the leveled rifles, as if to speak; and

then came the third command—deep, crisp and distinct: and the rifles roared forth their red message of death. A great cry rose from all the crowd, as if the whole body of human society had felt the wound of that dark deed; the group down the street melted away in frantic flight: and left the man with the brown curls standing alone in the middle of the street, swaying from side to side like a falling tree—and then those who loved him so well, saw the khaki column rush forward at a run, saw the great horse of the colonel ridden against, upon and over the swaying figure, which put up blind hands again, as if to ward off the oncoming mountain of flesh—and the bared head went down under the galloping beast, the beating hoofs went on, and the figure of Emerson Court-right lay prone in the street; while his blood flowed out and gave up its cry to Heaven against the tangled fabric of evils which had struck him down.



## CHAPTER XL

### THE KINGDOM CALLED HOME

A strange gathering it was which formed and melted away and changed from hour to hour, in those luxurious apartments overlooking the lake, as Emerson Courtright lay in the quiet of the remotest room, while surgeons examined his case and gave out their forecasts. Odette Cassler and her husband; Joyce Gray, who had come in from an Iowa town when she heard of Olive's trouble; the Grants, and the well-groomed, mobile-mouthed stage-folk, talked in low tones with Tim and Mollie Burns, Rabinowski of the packing-house, and others of the bolder denizens of Courtright's habitat on the West Side who dared to come and ask after the Strangler's welfare. Stranger and more eerie was the time when the night shut down, and only the nurses, the physicians and other attendants shared the vigil with the wife. Outside, sitting in a great chair, or lying on a couch, was posted Morgan Yeager, the guardian of privacy, the one who took control when Olive laid it down. Nobody came in but by his permission; and all went to him for commands. Mrs. Dearwester, tardily found in a remote village in New England, was still absent.

The press was exultant over the sudden collapse of the strike at the first showing of the government's teeth in the use of Colonel Bloodgood's troops, firing

with ball. The shooting of Courtright was unfortunate; but in no way did it militate against the firm wisdom of Colonel Bloodgood in refusing to palter with riot. It was a strange coincidence that the wounded man, when filling a useful place in society, had been the colonel's brother-in-law, and that they had been friends and college classmates. A painful thing for Colonel Bloodgood, that these former relations with the turbulent agitator should become a matter of public comment, through the pure chance of his regrettable but necessary military action; but Colonel Bloodgood's conscience could not fail to acquit him of blame in the premises. Justification was to be found in the fact of the restored quiet, and the resumption of traffic. All the papers spoke of this resumption of traffic as our forefathers would have referred to the taking up of some sacred practice, like the resumption of public worship after the removal of an interdict.

The *Observer's* story, that the strike had been settled by Courtright, and that he had met his death in trying to convey the news to the commander of the troops, was laughed at as a fake. And no one knew that he was murdered in malice at the command of an enemy, who knew when he gave it that the strike and the necessity of an appeal to force was over. That was a thing quite impossible of belief, even when the story was published that Courtright had written a note to Colonel Bloodgood, asking him to delay the movement of the troops, and apprising him of the fact that Courtright's presence along the line of march would mean that the strike was called off. The *Observer*, it is true, said that some one in

Courtright's name had hurriedly telephoned to that newspaper the news of the settlement, only a few minutes before the volley on the street: but the *Observer* was notorious for its pandering to the unions; and they were interested in spreading the impression that the use of the troops was needless. In very truth, most of the newspapers were violently desirous of justifying the firing. For one reason, it was a *fait accompli* of rulership, and must be backed up. For another, it would be a good thing to have lodgment, back in the public mind, of the idea of putting down strikes by the strong hand; especially that portion of the public which dropped crockery-ware on the heads of soldiers and officers from the thirteenth stories.

While this altercation was going on in the press and on the street, the man with the brown curls lay there pale and deathly quiet. He had been so piteously hurt by the bullet and the cruel fall under the galloping horse, the shock had been so paralyzing, that the surgeons dared not probe the wound, or do much except to give stimulants and await nature's rally. The patient was passive, merely lying like a corpse except for the light breath and the failing pulse. He had met the murderous bullet, advancing upon it like a warrior, with breast bared and brow uncovered, and it had pierced him through and through—as he had been pierced by no less deadly missiles, how many times! Now, however, it was the actual vital fluid that flowed inwardly, and would not be stanchèd; it was the nicely balanced force of material existence that was so beaten from equilibrium that he lay in that lethal calm like one asleep.

Olive sent all the attendants out of the room, and most of the time she hung over him, watching every quiver of the eyelid, listening to the little moans that came with increasing frequency from his lips, feeling momentarily for the message of the pulse. She had seen him shot and ridden down while proclaiming his message of peace, not once, but time and again; but she was not one to cry out or faint while there was need for action. Morgan went to her often and urged her to lie down and let him or the nurse take her place; but she put him gently away. She had put her face down in the blankets by his side, and let her arm rest lightly across him, until the thought had come to her that perhaps it might impede the faltering breath, and she denied herself the poor comfort of this endearment, standing or sitting by his side, hour after hour, until they wondered at her endurance.

"Can he live?" she asked.

"We do not know," said the physician. "His wound is one that does not show its real character for a day or so."

"Will he rally before—before the end?"

"Probably," was the reply. "That is, you are not to infer that there is no hope. I mean that he will be likely to rally from the shock before the internal inflammation becomes the dominant feature of the case. The real struggle will come then."

The doctor was right. The pulse grew fuller and more rapid; the breath came deeper, but quicker; and along the pale cheek ran a faint flush like that of morning. Ah! Knowledge hath penalties! A more ignorant woman would have hailed these with joy and hope. Olive saw in them the banners of the

vanguard of the oncoming fever. It was with a yearning fear, therefore, that she saw him open his eyes at last, and look at her with the surprise and pleasure of intelligence.

"It's good to wake—like this!" said he, smiling the strange smile of suffering. "I'm glad you came, dearie."

"You mustn't talk too much, sweetheart," she said in quite a matter-of-fact way, as she kissed him tremulously. "You must save your strength."

He took her hand in his and held it, while she noted with terror the heat of his palm, and pressed an electric button for the nurse, who came, took his temperature, and went out to telephone to the physician.

"Have they called the strike off?" he queried.

"Yes," said she.

"Was any one else hit?" he asked, after a pause.

"Not that we know about," she replied. "It is thought not. Don't think, or talk about it, darling!"

"That's good!" said he wearily, and then: "I wouldn't have thought that Jack would do such a thing."

She laid her finger gently on his lips in a way that he knew of sweet experience, commanded silence. He gave her a glance of comprehension and assent, and soon he seemed to be sleeping; but now the little moans were more frequent, and he began to repeat fragments of speech about Jack, and oftenest an expression of wonder as to how Jack could do such a thing. Morgan had entered the room now, and was sitting on the other side of the bed. He explained that Emerson was thinking of the strike, and of Jack

Enright's behavior. The patient could not have heard, it appeared, but he tried to explain, as if he had read their thoughts.

"I mean riding me down," said he. "It was hard—hard. I was shot through, anyhow—I was falling, anyhow. He ought not to have trampled me down, then! . . . Did the horse step on me?"

"No," answered Morgan. "It was the pavement that bruised your head."

"It isn't so bad, then," replied Emerson. "But for old Jack to ride me down, when I was—shot so—and falling, anyhow: as many games as I've won—for him!"

Whether or not he was quite free from delirium at this time, is hard to say. Sometimes, mere restriction of expression brings the simulation of the wandering mind. Probably he did not quite distinguish between the things he had mentioned and those of which he had only thought. Once or twice he spoke shudderingly of the way "they" had treated "the body."

"He was just thrown on the slab," said he. "They just threw him down on it!"

Olive and Morgan exchanged glances, and when they failed to make reply, Emerson half fretfully explained that he meant poor Overmeyer. He had been thinking of the difference between his own case, in this soft bed, surrounded by those who loved him, and that of the self-murdered engineer; and after this mental journey, he had spoken at such a great distance from the last topic that they had thought him delirious: but he was not. They realized this now, and also guessed at something of his meaning—but not

all—when he kept repeating: “It’s not so bad, then.” “It’s not bad, at all!” “It’s all right!”

The nurse and doctor came frequently, now, and the battle with the fever was raging furiously. Morgan sat on one side of the bed, and Olive on the other, both intent on every new or altered symptom, and constant in their attendance, whether nurse or physician went or stayed. It was delirium, now, without doubt. He was back in the Lattimore days; for he repeated the names “Mrs. Aylesbury,” “Mr. Dewey,” and “Mrs. Tolliver;” and several times, as if announcing a text, he said: “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living!” “Cleanse the inside of the cup and the platter,” said he, again, “that the outside thereof—,” and then he laughed softly, and in so ghastly a way that Olive put her face down in the coverlet and shook as with an ague, gripping the bed with her fingers.

Morgan sat thinking of all this man had sought to do and of the futilities and frustrations of his life—and his heart was now hardened at the contemplation of the agonies of this apostolate, now melted at the pathos of the scene before him. And constantly, in one of those odd persistencies of such thoughts in time of trouble, his mind turned over and over the lines:

“He hates him much,  
That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer.”

Like a refrain, it repeated itself, and not even the sight of the dear woman hiding her face in the bed

there and clasping the white spread in her hands, could drive it from his thoughts.

After so long a period of quiet that they thought him asleep, he asked of Olive—never turning his head toward Morgan:

“Is that Morgan over there?”

“Yes,” said she. “It’s Morgan.”

“It’s I, old man,” said Morgan.

“How long can you stay?” asked Emerson, and it was almost in his natural voice.

“As long as you please,” replied Morgan. “Until you’re well.”

“That will not be,” said Emerson, waiting as if he had abandoned the sentence, and then recommencing.

“That will not be long. . . . After I’m gone, sweetheart, you’ll take care of Morgan, won’t you? He has no coat. . . . He has no coat. . . . He ought to have a coat. . . . It must be bitter cold for him! Will you look after Morgan?”

“Yes, dear,” said she. “Yes. Don’t be uneasy about Morgan. He’s all right.”

“I didn’t know he was dressed so poorly,” said he again and again. “It was cruel! It was cruel! I wouldn’t have done that—after I was born again. . . . *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise.* . . . Keep the coat, my boy, until I come back—and I wouldn’t whip—whip any of the children, if—if I were you.”

Morgan rose and went out of the room, returning soon, as calm as ever. Nothing but his glistening eyes, and the tremulous indraught of his breath, told how he had been shaken.



Some sort of an opiate was now administered, and for some hours Emerson slept. Olive's mother arrived from New York, came in quietly, and asked that Olive be sent to the outer room. The two women embraced each other in silence; and Olive returned to the bedside. There was now no space or time for tears and mutual comfortings, until this stupendous problem of life and death could be solved.

Sometimes it seemed to them now that the end had come, he lay so still and immovable; but the slight heaving of the clothes over his chest proved their fears not yet justified.

The hours wore on through another day, and another night came down over the great throbbing city, the roar of which sounded muffled and distant to the perceptions of the watchers in the silent room. Mrs. Dearwester had begged Olive to yield for a little while to rest; but the answer had been, with a piteous glance from the great black eyes, "Not yet, ma; not yet. Let me stay; let me stay!" Yeager still sat like a statue, over across the bed. The hours went slowly by; and the great Clamor was hushed to the lull that precedes day. Olive was reclining in her chair, her eyes closed in very exhaustion, the long lashes sweeping down over the fair face—so pathetic a figure to the man of iron who looked at her! And then Morgan saw that Emerson was awake, and was looking at his wife. The subtle consciousness of a thought-change in the room seemed to rouse her; for she looked into his eyes and tried to smile.

"I want to speak to you of Mildred," said he; and the very fact of his speech being so calm and collected,

even though the voice was so very faint, struck fear to their hearts.

"Yes," said she; "what is it, dear?"

"She will be brought up to believe me a bad man. I have not been a bad man, in the way they will say. They hate me, not for the evil, but for the good things I have tried to do. You will always be a great woman, darling, and she will let you talk to her. When she grows up—old enough to wonder about her father—go to her, and put me right with my baby! . . . . . Tell her, as the golden text of her life, from her father, to repeat this every day: *The world can not hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that its works are evil.* Olive, I leave my baby's memory of me, as my only legacy to you—to set it right!"

"Oh, yes, dear, darling! You know I will: but you mustn't talk like this! Let me send for the nurse!"

"No," said he. "It is over. I want just you two—you and Morgan here—just the three of us. We three have been good—friends and loved one another always. I think we always shall—you two here: I over there, somewhere."

"No, no!" cried Morgan. "Here, all of us; for many, many years!"

"No, old man," was the answer. "It's good of you to say that. But—"

He took Olive's hand in both of his, and looked up into her face as if to command her thoughts with her attention.

"I think I'm going to die, now," said he. "Don't

grieve too much, darling. You'll not believe me as I say this: but it's for the best. . . . I've had a great life, sweetheart. I wouldn't exchange with any one. . . . I've had my part in the beginning of the big struggle—the struggle to bring home to the world the democracy of Jesus, in its fullness. . . . It's a good deal to have set up the smallest outwork of the Kingdom of God on earth. This awakening to the light is the greatest thing any man ever had—the most blessed—”

He lay back, as if exhausted. They felt his hands and feet, found that they were cold, and began chafing them, laying them between the bottles of hot water. When he spoke next, his voice was weaker, but still his speech was lucid and calm.

“Don't fear, Morgan,” said he; “it will be all right—it will be all right.”

“I'm sure of it,” replied Morgan. “You'll get over this, all right!”

“No, no!” answered Emerson. “It's too late for that. “I mean our cause—the cause of Jesus. He will triumph. There is too much knowledge this time, for us to fail. . . . When the Son shall make the world free, it shall be free indeed. . . . Don't worry. It was a victorious warfare you . . . enlisted me in, that time. I've had a great life, Morgan. . . . And, darling, I've had you, for a little while: the greatest woman in the world for a friend and a wife. . . . And such a friend as Morgan. . . . And—if I have died in the cause—such a cause to die for!”

They had ceased now in their endeavors to turn his mind to recovery, though they busied themselves with

feverish energy with the restorative measures prescribed by the physician for just this emergency. All worked to reanimate the flagging functions. The nurse came in and gave him a powder; and for a while he was quiet again: but they noted with chilling fear that the pulse fluttered and faltered now, the beats coming so lightly as to be almost imperceptible.

"Morgan," said he presently, "come here! Raise me up, old fellow, and put something under my shoulders—there! Morgan, you look after my people. Don't let Jack Enright drift away again. He's a good man at heart—help him to be so really, until his disease ends his life. It won't be so very long, Morgan. . . . Tell John Bloodgood for me . . . that I'd like to have shaken hands with him before I—I died, and found out why—why he killed me. . . . There must be something—I don't understand. . . . No, I don't understand it, at all. . . . Bid good-by to Tim and Mollie for me, Morgan, and—"

He seemed to stop speaking rather from the crowding of ideas, than from weakness.

"My arms are so heavy, dearie," said he presently. "I can't lift them. . . . Put them around you, won't you—once more. . . . There, there, sweetheart! It's all right! . . . I couldn't have made you perfectly happy much longer, anyhow. . . . I was just a preacher . . . nothing but that . . . and they wouldn't let me—preach the truth; but we—you and I—were perfectly happy, for as long as was best. . . . Now lay me down again, Morgan. Won't you sing to me a little, dear? Just a little. . . . Sing *The New Kingdom*."

Sweet and soft as a flute, tremulous with the agony

of the moment, obedient to the passion of a life, the great voice obeyed.

“‘Two little friendless children’”

it sang,

“‘Comrades for more than a year,  
One sold flow’rs on a doorstep,  
One swept a crossing near.  
He was a curly-headed laddie,  
Brimful of laughter and fun;  
She was a staid little lassie,  
Her hair kissed gold by the sun.  
And when the lights of the city  
Told that the night had come,  
She would tell him a wonderful story  
She had heard of a kingdom called Home!’”

The stanza was finished quiveringly, and then Olive paused. Emerson’s eyes slowly opened, as if from the beholding of a vision, and he whispered: “It is beautiful! Sing on!”

With the fortitude that none but women know, she sang on.

“‘Roses that cost not a penny  
Grew in a garden fair;  
Lilies that never faded  
Blossomed in winter there.  
Over a golden threshold  
Children were always at play;  
Nobody sang for money,  
So nobody sent them away.  
And when she had finished her story,  
They wished that a Stranger would come,  
And show them the beautiful pathway  
That leads to the kingdom called Home.’”

Olive looked pathetically at Emerson, as for the word of command: he nodded to her a request for the last stanza; and as she steeled herself for the trial, the voice came as of old from his lips.

"While this young sister," said he, "sings the last verse, please lift your hearts to God in a prayer that the Kingdom called Home, the Kingdom Jesus meant when he spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, may come to every people and every clime—and then rise, and receive the benediction!"

For the third time, pure, lyric, full of plangent ecstasy, the voice took up the refrain.

"One night when the snow was falling,  
He came for the old, sweet tale;  
But her voice began to falter,  
Her face grew wan and pale.  
One kiss on the gold-crowned forehead,  
And he knew the Stranger had come  
To show her the beautiful pathway  
That led to the kingdom called Home."

She ceased, her voice dying away like the vanish of the tone of a violin. There was a smile on her husband's face, and his lips moved, as if repeating the word "home"; but they heard no sound—scarcely detected a breath.

He was oblivious again, to his surroundings: but in about the time it would have taken for his congregation to have risen after the song, he feebly lifted both hands, and stretched them forth in blessing. For the first few words, they heard only a murmur, and then his utterance grew distinct: "May the grace of God," said he, "and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be

and abide with you every one, now and ever more—  
Amen!”

The hands dropped in lax exhaustion on the counterpane, and lay still. The expression of exaltation faded from his face, and he seemed to sleep. And even while they breathed freer in the belief that, lulled by the beloved voice, he had found rest—they heard a strange sigh, the sigh we heave but once; and the features assumed that calm from which there is no disturbance. The Stranger had shown him the wonderful pathway to his Home.

## CHAPTER XLI

### THE LAST WORD

So here endeth the story of Emerson Courtright, son of Winthrop Courtright the Abolitionist, preacher of the economics of Jesus, soldier of the Common Good, one of the many found worthy of one form or another of death in the cause of the New Reformation.

Of whom Doctor Bovee, in his *Standard of Zion*, uttered the dispassionate verdict of respectable society on this man's life—a verdict upon which the world, the flesh and the devil were agreed, strange to say, with the church. And, surely, where powers so widely separated as to point of view, come to such an agreement, there can be no doubt as to the truth.

"The death of Emerson Courtright," said the good doctor, "has its message for young ministers. It was not so very long ago that he was a flame of fire in the service of God, bringing many to the altar, under God, in Pentecostal outpourings of the Spirit. Then some great spiritual temptation came to him, and he yielded. Whether it was the enticements of a wicked woman, or the allurements of a meretricious social philosophy, we may not now say. But it is a matter of history in his case, as in many others, that he took up with socialistic and anarchistic teachings, and with a low sexual morality at about the same time. These things go together.



"He made an audacious effort to corrupt and debauch the First Church of Lattimore, of which he was pastor. 'This effort failed through the firmness in God's service of those members whose stability in spiritual affairs and in the life of business has made that church noted as one of the strongholds of religious militancy.

"From that time his course led downward. The press has told of the life in the lowest and most turbulent slums of the great cities of that ex-preacher whose sobriquet 'Strangler Courtright' is of such sorrowful import to those who know its low and tempestuous significance.

"His wife—one of the sweetest of Christian women—for the protection of her own child was forced to seek a legal separation from him—a step justified in this case, if it ever can be. We finally hear of him, in the packing-house district, choosing the most disgusting task possible, as if in a sort of fierce defiance of the society which once knew and loved him. And at last we find him renewing his *liaison* with the notorious woman, the guilty love for whom was one great influence in driving him from his first charge—first and last. The task of further comment is one from which we shrink. The old-fashioned preaching of old-fashioned conversion and churchly living, goes with the old-fashioned morality. The first and shortest step aside from either line, is the one charged with the greatest peril to the young clergyman. This is the moral of the life of Emerson Courtright."

They took the body to the church of his adoption—that Hall where the struggling, erring laborers met to work out in their imperfect way the problems of this

world's life, and where he had talked and wrestled with them to show them the identity of the law of equal freedom with the law of love. In his death, he was understood and loved of many who had distrusted him living. The denizens of the slums and purlieus came silently into the dingy hall, looked wonderingly upon the stately lady who was his widow, as she walked leaning upon the arm of good Mollie Burns, gazed questioningly on the pretty women who sang *Lead, Kindly Light*, and *Abide with Me*, and voices trained to other and grander auditoriums, and then, as the congregation filled the hall and thronged the stairway and the street outside, they formed in orderly ranks and passed in a great column up one side of the stairway and down the other, all looking reverently at the white face of him who, as they dimly felt, had died for them. There was neither bell, book nor candle at this funeral; but with love and respect, those who cared for this man committed his body to the earth, in that cemetery where slept many of those among whom he had chosen to live. Not a few of those who could find a place in the hall, knew the stocky man with the honest brown eyes, who spoke—spoke so feelingly of him who had passed away, that tears flowed from many an eye long barren of such confession of feeling.

“The man who lies here,” said the speaker, “has been one of this day's bearers of the torch of truth. All the religious faith I have, I owe to him. He was once a minister of what he supposed was the gospel; but he found out that what he preached was the paganism which flowed in and permeated and displaced the teachings of the divine Revolutionist, Jesus,

and he had the sublime courage to raise the standard of that Reformation that must grow and increase until every church claiming to be Christian shall be rent in twain in a struggle as much greater than the Reformation of Luther, as the question of man's right to life itself—a free, unfearing life—is greater than that of papal supremacy. He lived and worked, and at last he died—for this Reformation.

"I was his friend; and I brought to him the message of the extirpation of poverty through justice—of emancipation from the modern feudal servitude to the lords of the lands and highways. But I was a materialist. Emerson Courtwright took my low-conceived version of the philosophy of the Prophet of San Francisco, and passing it through the crucible of his warm and loving heart, he brought it forth the spiritual philosophy of Jesus, applied to the things of to-day. He showed me that Jesus was killed, not because of His theology, but for His politics. This poor Carpenter came preaching 'good tidings to the poor.' It was charged against Him, *He stirreth up the people*. His followers said of Him, meaning a political redemption, *But we hoped it was he which should redeem Israel*. Many a time, in that great apostolate through Judea, cities were afraid to let Him in because of the multitude which followed Him; even at the last, they were afraid of the people: and down there by the sea of Tiberias, He went up into the mountain, *perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king*. And my dead friend here pointed out to me the plain truth that Jesus evidently meant to set up a purified earthly, political government at Jerusalem; and that His heart

broke when He saw that it could not be done because men's hearts were hardened.

"And then he showed me the political economy of the New Testament—and especially of the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule, and the commandment of the law of love—in the abandonment of property rights, in so far as human need required such abandonment. He showed me that the early Christians were communists, that 'not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own'; that they lived, these early churches, all over the world, as little knots of brethren who shared all things, in a struggle to realize the law of love; and that, even in that fearful age, none wanted—showing, that before paganism captured the church, the political economy of Jesus was the conqueror of poverty.

"I am telling you these things because I want you to know that this brother lying here was to me—as he has been to so many of you—a sweet influence, in this time of iron and steel and brass—bringing faith in fraternity back into life. And so I tell you that I was troubled at the communism of Jesus, thinking of the every-day truth of the text of Paul, *If any man will not work, neither shall he eat*; until this dead brother showed me 'the perfect law' of which James speaks, the law of liberty; and those other utterances, *Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*, and Jesus' answer to the old, old questions, What shall we eat, or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? in these words of vast economic meaning, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*.

“So it was that he became my leader and teacher, as he has been the leader and teacher of so many here; and as I had once been his. He took the hard learning which I had given him, and harmonized it with the truths of all true religion; and he preached it from a great American pulpit. He told his people of the communism of Jesus; but he also told them that only things necessary to be made common were so treated. He showed that if we in this age were only to keep out of the hands of the individual those things which are of common creation, and therefore of common right, we should thereby bring an era in which the things which feed and shelter and clothe mankind would be so plentiful and cheap—as matches and newspapers now are—that no one would care to assert private ownership in them, as against another person’s desire—and that we should thus have arrived at practical communism by common consent, through universal plenty, by rendering unto all the things that belong to all, and sacredly unto each the things which are his alone.

“This man, too, had such a seer’s frenzy of prophecy, that he expected to set up a fortress of this Kingdom of God in his church, by telling this truth, to him so obvious, to his people. But, ‘as it was in the beginning,’ they would not.

“He found a church calling itself Christian in which the ordinary, wildly impractical scheme was the rule of conduct—that of ignoring the necessity of putting the democracy of Jesus into institutions, and then expecting the robbed and betrayed people to continue in obedience to churches lost to the basic truths on which Christianity was founded—churches which

preached individual righteousness, it is true, but which fell back paralyzed before the great problems of the day, by offering merely individual salvation as a remedy for collective wrongs. He found the church bought and delivered, bound and gagged, to the plutocracy. He found ministers in deadly terror of the dread powers of plutocracy, and forced by their fears to cringe to the men Jesus denounced, to turn away from the themes which besieged their consciences for treatment, and to talk the milkless dogmas of theology, or preach around and around the living truths of to-day, in such terms that overfed and drowsy wealth might nod in the pew in ignorance of the diluted radicalism dribbling feebly from the pulpit.

"From his pulpit, he told the living truth—and he was made an outcast and a pariah. Some may say that he went down; but I tell you that he rose to the life of a prophet. As he lay in death—murdered by the plutocracy he had assailed—he said the words I shall give you as his last message. 'Do not fear,' said he, 'we shall not fail. There are too many who know the truth!'

"There are, indeed, too many who know the truth! The nations of history have fallen because they had not the social conscience which impelled Emerson Courtright to leave all for its sake. We have it. Thank God—and thank such men as he who lies before us, and those who shall follow after him—we have it. The reign of Mammon is drawing to a close. The new Reformation is at hand. The mouths of men will not always be stopped. Divine truth will conquer, even where it is at first unrecognized because it comes not from that spurious Ark of which they

are the depositaries. The awakening is upon us. It will come, bringing, not the peace of spiritual coma, but the sword of spiritual wrestling, of inquiry, and upheaval. Our brother here, as he has said, has lived a great life; but in a sense which never occurred to his lowly spirit. Sometime, better than now, this will be known. The exploiters of the people; those who force men to fix their eyes upon the muck-rake of their living, so that they can not spiritually live—these are strong. But the time is coming when ‘the strong shall be as tow, and his work as a spark; and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them!’ ”

This story, as the reader was warned, ended with the last chapter. Whoso has read further, has done so at his own risk. What of the new Reformation? Perhaps we have said enough of that. Let us only add, that the grave in the humble cemetery possesses a curious attraction for many people. The sexton looks in wonder at the path, worn by the feet of common-looking folk, which leads to it, as to a shrine. Who knows what dynamic thoughts may be in the heads of some of them? Sometimes the sexton sees a slender woman there, accompanied by a curly-haired, growing girl, with blue eyes. And sometimes comes a stocky man with graying hair, with a stately woman whose great luminous eyes are as black as the sky of night. They come and go together.

THE END







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